

SIMON BOLIVAR

Uniform with this book

ADVENTURE IN THE WEST

SPIKE OF SWIFT RIVER

SONS OF THE DRAGON

DANCING STAR

SON OF EMPIRE

PETER THE GREAT

EAST INDIA ADVENTURE



Bolívar—the Liberator

SIMON BOLIVAR

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For
CAPTAIN HENRY LANG JENKINSON

FOREWORD

SIMÓN BOLÍVAR'S LIFE was an absorbing romance; to tell his story is necessarily to shorten a great drama which was actually lived. He likened himself once to Don Quixote, but he was in reality more like the Cid or like the Grand Capitán, Gonzales de Cordoba, the legendary and almost legendary heroes of Spain, and yet of all the generals of America's romantic period he was the most modern. He used his sense of the dramatic for the highest of social purposes.

He was the southern embodiment of our sacred American conception—the right of men to be free. He gave his mind and his soul to liberating his country. He was a life-long correspondent of Lafayette, honoured by the Washington family, and in the midst of chaos he followed the precepts of another American, Thomas Jefferson.

The background of his exploits was no less vivid than the man himself. His marches were accomplished and his battles were fought in tropical America, a terrain made brilliant by the gaudy colours of macaws and parrots and decorated with trailing orchids and mahogany trees, or else he was above the clouds on some glacial slope of the Andes sparkling with eternal snow, where condors spread wings which measure nine feet from tip to tip. The cities he liberated were old in the culture of Holy Spain and beautiful in the medieval manner of the mother country. He loved to dance the fandango.

with ladies whose tortoise-shell combs were a foot high under their mantillas and who clicked castanets while they held a rose in their teeth, yet next day, sabre unsheathed, spurring his horse to the head of a battalion, he would lead a charge for the cause of liberty

Even to-day Bolívar's travels, not to mention his marches, astound us His routes when retraced by well-equipped scientific expeditions are considered by them to be exploits of vast difficulty His marches were probably the greatest in the military history of either hemisphere, and yet once when he was ill as a young man a doctor told him, "My son, you may recover, but most certainly you will never ride a horse again "

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I

DESCENDANT OF CONQUISTADORES

LIKE A HALF-MOON sailing on its forward point, the carrack emerged from the white mist of equatorial noon. Her sails were Tyrian purple, azure, and green-yellow; on them crosses were embroidered, and the heroic figure of the Virgin Mary. The flag of Holy Spain embroidered with crowns, castles, lilies, and lions fluttered from the maintop and at the foretop another, showing a green cross upon a white ground. This was the personal flag of the Admiral of the Oceans.

Below on the high and narrow deck of the stein-castle the Admiral, Christopher Columbus, was taking his noon observation. The swelling waves were

all been Spanish except perhaps one great great-grandmother who may possibly have been Indian, but of this no one can be sure. No child in Venezuela was better born. Few were richer. This was the second son and youngest child of Don Juan Vincente Bolívar y Ponte.

There were, besides, two sisters. One was fair and blue-eyed like the older boy Juan Vincente. These two had sunny natures; they were almost placid. But the little boy and his sister María Antonia were full of fire, quick tempered. Simón had clear greenish skin with hair of the darkest red and eyes like black diamonds with a candle lighted behind them. The little boy was thin and very nervous, all eyes and energy.

He was impertinent, stubborn, brilliant—when his interest was aroused—and very affectionate. His face was lighted at times by a sudden radiant smile. The Spanish race, whose history is much stained by cruelty, is especially tender with its children. Simón was spoiled, his sisters adored him, and his elder brother gave in to him. His father died when he was only three and when his mother was twenty seven. Quite naturally she adored her baby son.

There were fascinating toys for this little boy to play with and exciting things for him to do. He lived at first in the big, dark house in Caracas, the capital of Venezuela. The city, medieval looking, except in one important particular, is set in a circle of vast green mountains. These look like stage-set mountains because although they are mighty and rugged they appear as if covered with soft blue-

green velvet The Spanish houses are of one story with great iron-barred windows and ornate doorways They are painted faintly in chalky shades of violet, pink, orange, sea-green, or blue; all the roofs are reddish tiles Duplicates of these houses may be seen in many medieval towns in the south of Spain to-day, but the city of Caracas is and always was different from these towns: the streets are laid out in a geometric pattern, as in New York The houses are of the Old World, but the streets are of the New.

In one of the largest of these houses on the Plaza San Jacinto, Simón Bolívar was born and in it he spent the early years of his childhood It was full of heavy, medieval Spanish furniture and portraits of his ancestors with their shining cuirasses, lace collars, and long swords In every corner there were dim antique mirrors and pictures of the Saints. But the patio, except in the rainy season, was bright with sun Here Simón played with painted toy soldiers imported from Spain He set them in careful battle array, one force opposing the other. He ordered them to march When they remained in place he pounded them with a stone

"Don't destroy your toys. You are a little powder horn," said his Uncle Carlos

"If I am a powder horn, look out! I may explode," replied Simón

"You are an impertinent child, Simoncito," said his uncle, rather sadly, for upon him had fallen the burden of the guardianship of this child.

Vincente, Simón's brother, had a mask made like a bull. He would charge Simón, who would play

his cape so that it opened like a fan and would rise on the tips of his toes as the bull's charge missed him by a hair. And then with his little sword—it was a real weapon—he would deliver the final thrust. Sometimes he tore Vincente's silk shirt.

But Sunday was the great day. On that day he accompanied his mother to High Mass. He used to stand in the patio dressed in his best clothes, with his hair brushed, pomaded, and slightly curled, waiting for her to come down the wide stone stairs. When she appeared she stopped for just a moment before she caught him up and kissed him. She stood smiling under her high comb and the mantilla of the very finest black lace which draped it. In her ears gleamed blue diamonds, the size of coffee berries. Her hair was carefully curled with quince juice, made into formal black ringlets, and the mantilla was held in place with white camellias. Around her neck were strings of pearls and a great jewelled cross shone on her breast. At her tiny waist a gold watch recently sent from Paris ticked so that you could hear it even in church. Her hands were held stiffly, she could not bend her fingers for the number of rings which she wore. Her little satin shoes like ballet slippers had crossed laces over her white silk stockings. She was dressed entirely in black.

Born María Concepción Palacio y Sojo, she came of a family both rich and honourable. Some fifteen servants and retainers accompanied Simón's mother to the church. When she walked, her bell shaped skirt fluttered after her and a servant walked just behind carrying a great black lace shawl. One also

walked beside her covering her head with a parasol, while two others near by carried her fan and large prayer book. Her jewelled rosary in its ivory box was carried by a favourite Indian maid. Farther back was a small Negro boy, Sambo, dressed in brocade and a turban. He carried the Señora's pet monkey. This little ape, whose hair was neatly parted in the middle, was not really supposed to go to church. But the Señora's confessor, the personal curate of the Casa Bolívar, said that it did no harm for beasts to receive an occasional blessing, and the matter was supposed to be secret from the priests who celebrated the Mass. When the monkey came near the ornate church he was covered with his own little cape. Yet during the Mass he would chatter and scold, making Simón and his sisters giggle. Matea, the young Indian slave girl, and Hipólita, the giant black nurse who loved him, went in the procession as Simón's personal retainers.

Doña Concepción had a special place reserved for herself, her children, and her attendants in church. One day she was rudely jostled aside while a common-looking man with only a few attendants took her place. During Mass, Simón shed secret tears of rage.

"It would not have been this way if my father had lived," he said to himself. And then he resolved to defend the dignity of his mother. He alone would challenge the Spaniard. As soon as they were again in the blinding noon out of the dark, incense-filled church, he said to his mother, "I await the Spaniard. He shall not displace you."

But his mother ordered the giant Hipólita to pick

him up and, kicking and screaming in disgraceful fashion, he was carried home. Afterwards he was so ashamed of the incident that he could never speak of it to his mother, but he soon learned the reason of the Spaniard's behaviour. All Spaniards thought of South Americans as inferiors. The six-year-old Creole hated them. In him stirred the pride of a new race.

Simón hardly remembered his father, but he knew that it was because of his death that his mother looked white and sad. She became very thin and frail. It was thought that the pure air at the Bolívar hacienda, San Mateo, would benefit her. Simón loved San Mateo above all places on earth. But its air and sun did not work the cure which was expected. One day, before the boy was nine years old, he saw a nun approaching him. As she came nearer he saw that she was his mother. She had put away forever those romantic Spanish dresses which became her so well. The nun kissed him very tenderly; she held him almost too tight. And then, mounting her white mule, she rode away at a brisk trot. She was lost to his view in a cloud of dust. Forever.

Four orphans were now left in the care of their maternal uncle, Don Carlos Palacio. Vincente was old enough to become the Señor of San Mateo, the great plantation fifty miles from Caracas which was planted chiefly in sugar cane and where nearly fifteen hundred slaves were employed. The girls, who were fourteen and sixteen, were considered, according to the Spanish custom, to be quite old enough to be married. Simoncito only, therefore, was left to per-

plex Don Carlos This child was frankly a problem. Everyone who came near him spoiled him outrageously Don Carlos did the best he could He employed the eminent judge Miguel José Sanz as tutor Sanz took the severe way, hoping by stern discipline to make up for lost time He criticised almost everything his young pupil did He forbade many things And then he overstepped the bounds

Venezuelans of that day were the greatest riders on earth Even those Irishmen, veterans of Napoleon's wars, who were the best riders of that day in all Europe admitted that they had met their superiors when at a later date they crossed the sea to fight with the greatest soldier of them all, Bolívar. It was not healthy, therefore, to criticise the horsemanship of a South American grandee, not even that of a nine-year-old one

"I fear, Señorito," said Sanz, "that you will never make a caballero " (It is no accident that this word means both gentleman and horseman in Spanish)

"How do you expect me to learn to ride," asked the boy, "when all you allow me to ride is this mangy burro?"

Soon afterwards the jurist Sanz resigned his position and made a report on his pupil Not the best report in the world His pupil was, he said, "Insupportable, restless, imperative, audacious, wilful, heedless to all counsel, intolerable before his own family and before strangers "

Simón Bolívar had enjoyed from the moment of his birth a personal income of twenty thousand pesos A peso at that time was approximately equal to five

shillings, but in comparing those times with our own we see that money was almost ten times as valuable then as now. After the death of both his parents Simón and his brother and sisters inherited a vast property, for their mother had been almost as rich as their father. They found themselves possessing interests in almost all Venezuelan enterprises. They owned valuable mining property near the coast, cattle farms on the llanos, houses in La Guaira, and two fine town houses in Caracas besides the mansion on the Plaza San Jacinto where they lived. And then there was San Mateo. This vast plantation had a big water-driven sugar mill and rum distillery, besides lemon and orange orchards and numerous other crops. It was, in fact, the central town of a great farming district and the Bolívars ruled there like feudal dukes. They ruled well and kindly. It is the universal testimony of unprejudiced observers that most South Americans at this time were just to their slaves and servants. Bolívar was to free all his slaves—at a time, by the way, when America's great Southern patriots and democrats still owned their labour.

A traveller from the United States who saw San Mateo a few years later said that it was like a "fanciful Chinese picture of a North American pastoral scene." The air was clear and bright, colours glowed with more than natural brilliance changing ordinary green to a shimmering emerald hue shot with blue. The foothills of the Andes made an azure background, while vivid morning glories and marvels-of Peru made spots of purest colour in the

foreground. There were fragrant hedges of lime trees covered with fruit and blossoms, and the orange orchards perfumed the soft and sunny air.

Vincente, the youthful lord of this paradise, loved to have his younger brother come to visit him and Simoncito, on the finest horses in his brother's stable, cantered over a domain whose limits he could seldom reach. No one as long as he lived was ever again to dare to say that he was not a *gran caballero*.

He had become aware of the castes in the society in which he lived. First came the Captain General, who was sent by the King of Spain to rule Venezuela, and members of the Real Audiencia, the counsel of the Captain General, who must be addressed as "Excellency" even by members of the Bolivar family. Then came his own class, the descendants of the Spanish Conquistadores, called Mantuanas, or Creoles. Having inhabited and civilised the land in which they lived for nearly three hundred years, they felt themselves to be a true native aristocracy. They were proud of their blue blood and also of their purely South American heritage. They called themselves *Americanos*, just as George Washington called himself an American.

Next below this class came the professionals: judges, members of the bar, officers from second lieutenant up, professors, etc. Then the merchants, capitalists, and bankers, all of whom were white. Belonging to no class, and pervading them all, were the clergy, who were both powerful and rich. Below all these castes were the men of colour—all colours in Venezuela. Even the Creoles themselves were

divided into Sangre Azules (blue bloods) and *Mestizos* (mixed bloods) There were the *pardos*, mixed white and Indian, the *mulattoes*, mixed white and black, and the *zambos*, Indian and black

Due to the fact, which turned out to be a fortunate circumstance, that there was little or no gold in Venezuela, Spanish rule there had been more stupid than cruel Yet the natives had submitted to nearly intolerable conditions They were forced to sell their produce at about 300 per cent less than its European value and, on the other hand, to pay 300 per cent more for the articles imported from Spain We can now place the proper value upon the fine European harp in the drawing room of the house in the Plaza San Jacinto at Caracas and on the pianoforte which was carried by six men from the port of La Guaira over the mountains The only path through these great defiles had been made by mules There were no wheels in Venezuela

Everything was taxed unmercifully and trade was absolutely forbidden with any country save Spain Any vessel found in Venezuelan waters without a Royal Spanish permit was to be treated as an enemy All these laws and restrictions were enforced The hated Philippine Company had absolute power, the power of life and death over the South Americans Death was the penalty for evading these Spanish trade laws The Philippine Company had its own vessels on the Spanish Main, a coast guard, which watched for smugglers It had secret agents every where All royal representatives sent from Spain had only one end in view, to get rich at the expense

of the South Americans and to return with their loot to Spain

Education was forbidden. Books were dangerous contraband. The city of Mérida, Venezuela, drew up a respectful petition and sent it to the King of Spain requesting permission to establish a university. In it the clergy were to teach the students the principles of the true religion.

The King replied to this petition, "We do not consider education advisable in America."

A native of New Granada—now Colombia—bought a printing press in Philadelphia and had it sent at his own expense to his native city. Not only was it broken up, but the public-spirited citizen was sent to Cádiz in chains to rot in one of the cruellest prisons in Spain.

Some Spaniards dared to say that South Americans were a kind of animal. In spite of all these things a genuine culture existed. Mozart was played in the drawing-rooms, the beautiful Spanish dances, the fandango and the bolero, were performed to traditional melodies picked out on guitars, the women were gay and magnificently dressed and the men were gallant and no less gaudy than the ladies. Many customs of old Spain, the Spain of Ferdinand and Isabella, had been preserved here at the foot of the Andes when they had almost disappeared in the mother country. Columbus discovered America in the same year that Boabdil, the Moor, issued forth from the Vermilion Tower of the Alhambra to surrender to Ferdinand and Isabella. The settlers who came to the Spanish Main were medieval Spaniards.

By underground ways much European and North American culture and many ideas had permeated South American society. The minuets of Mozart were not the only touches of refinement which enlivened the scene.

But music entered where books could not. Surrounded by many luxuries and countless domestics and slaves, young Simón had almost no books. His first romantic cravings were supplied by the black Hipólita, whom he used to call Mother.

Hipólita was the colour of ebony. Perhaps it was because of her that Bolívar all his life felt a sympathy towards the dark people who form so large a percentage of the population of Venezuela. He never forgot Hipólita. Years afterwards when he had reached the zenith of his career, when in Peru he had refused a crown, a letter came from Caracas announcing that Hipólita was living in poverty. The great man provided a princely stipend for his beloved nurse, though at that time, as always with him, high honour did not go hand in hand with high pay. Simón Bolívar became a popular idol, he came near to being worshipped by a continent, yet he was never rich. Thus the stipend which he sent to Hipólita no doubt nearly emptied his own purse.

But military glory and the heavy cares of state were in the far-distant future. Now a little boy listened to strange fairy tales. Hipólita's own mother had heard these tales in the jungles of Africa. She told him strange African stories of a sleek black leopard—not unlike the jaguars which roamed at that

day upon the llanos, those great plains of Venezuela—who changed himself into a black-haired prince and married a beautiful princess. The princess was frightened, however, because the bridegroom always roamed alone at nights. Then one terrible night the princess knew that her husband was a leopard! She was saved from the terrors of her position by a giant tortoise who befriended her and allowed her to ride away upon his back *

When Simón was older he was told other tales which were more horrible—more horrible because they were true.

In Peru an uncrowned prince, a lineal descendant of the ancient Incas, whom Pizarro had robbed of their empire, revolted against the barbarities of the Spaniards. He raised an army of forty thousand Indians and marched at the head of it to free his brothers and to avenge his ancestors. But he was captured and imprisoned. He was condemned to death, but not to ordinary execution. He was dragged to the place of his torment by wild horses. There he saw his wife and children killed before his eyes. His tongue was pulled out and finally he was bound to four horses which were driven in different directions. His remains were burned at a stake, his house was burned to the ground, and his descendants were branded pariahs for all time.

“Why did they let them do it?” asked Simón.

“What could they do?” replied Hipólita. “The Spaniards were all about. The South Americans who watched were helpless.”

* This is a genuine ancient African legend

The boy cried in his sleep and Matea, the young Indian slave girl, said to Hipólita, "You should not tell the young master such terrible stories. He has nightmares."

"Why not? Since they are true, someone is sure to tell them." Hipólita spoke justly, for even in a continent without books these things were common knowledge.

The romantic and military history of Spain and New Spain was somehow taught to Simón by a succession of tutors all of whom were men of real learning and worth. Don Carlos Palacio performed a great service for his ward in choosing men of such distinction; they could not have been easy to find. Padre Andujar was one of the men whom the scientist Humboldt praised for his learning. Andres Bello was one of the foremost poets of South America, he was, besides, devoted to out-of-door sports.

In the ancient and worn volumes which were all that could be obtained in Venezuela the boy read, as all young Spaniards ever have and ever will, of Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, the immortal Cid. He could recite Juan Ruiz and Lope de Vega. *El Burlador de Sevilla* (Don Juan) was not forbidden. More seriously he read *The History of the Conquest of New Spain* by del Castillo, his quick mind contrasted this work with the humane history of the West Indies by Bartolome de las Casas, the monk who was the friend of the Indians.

He learned to write Spanish poetry himself and to turn sonorous phrases. He was so apt at composition

that Andrés Bello expected him to grow up to be a man of letters. He was not unprepared, therefore, for the enlightened modern, or, as some called him, the dangerous radical, who was really to form his mind. It seemed something of a miracle that Don Carlos Palacio should have chosen such a man to become the tutor of his ward. In this Don Carlos thought and acted boldly. The new tutor was Simón Rodríguez.

Rodríguez had many serious ideas which were in advance of his time. He had dedicated his life to the cause of human liberty. He was never without a volume of Rousseau, whose works he knew almost by heart. He was a wanderer and had visited many countries; he spoke and read many languages. The great social reforms of the French Revolution, as well as its great failures, he had observed as an eyewitness. Tom Paine was one of his favourite authors. He had only admiration for the great North American patriots, Jefferson, Samuel Adams, and Washington.

The tutor and the pupil became fast friends at once. They found that they had congenial tastes and by common consent they galloped away to San Mateo. Rodríguez liked it there, as everyone did, but he began to talk of the wild pampas of Venezuela, those limitless llanos inhabited by a race of centaurs. He told tales of wild riding and rodeos which made the black eyes of his pupil blaze.



II

THE CENTAURS

"I WANT TO GO to the llanos," announced Simón in his imperious way. They were sitting in the shadow of the great stone sugar mill at San Mateo which was round like a lighthouse. Rodriguez looked like a wild shepherd from the hills, with his shaggy, unkempt beard, his old leather coat, and his staff. The staff was a symbol to him, it meant his pilgrimage, his quest carried forward in the four quarters of the globe, his search for human liberty. Simón took his knee and shook it to wake him from his reverie. "I want to go to the llanos! I want to go now!"

Rodriguez looked at him as if he had just remembered that he was there and that he was supposed to be the tutor of this bright-eyed imp

"You would not last a day in the llanos. How would you face the wild bulls of the pampas? You are small, even small for your age."

"The lighter the rider the faster the race," said Simón at once.

"There are terrible beasts and terrible flying things and even more terrible creeping things in the llanos. You would be afraid and go galloping home."

"You lie," said Simón.

His tutor fetched him a smart crack with his staff over the buttocks.

"Apologise," he ordered.

Simón was rubbing the injured parts. "I'm sorry to have been rude," he said. "But it is untrue that I would be afraid. I will not unsay that; it is untrue." But he moved out of the reach of the stout staff.

"The great llanos are not the place for pampered Señoritos who have never seen a bull except on their own estates or in the Plaza Major in the city of Caracas, or who have seen no fights but cockfights. How would you withstand the charge of a thousand animals, both cattle and the wild animals of the jungle, when they are herded in one great ring in the three-day rodeos of the llanos?"

"I should set my spear and hold my seat."

Rodríguez did not bother to glance at the twelve-year-old.

"The jungle is so thick and green and full of steam that a man may not see two feet in front of him, and if he gets lost he will be eaten, but he may be eaten in many ways. There are"—he lowered his voice—"there are vast black bats whose wingspread

is as wide as a grown man can reach, and at night they settle on their prey softly and fan him with their black wings while they suck away all his blood."

Simón's dark eyes were fixed and his lips moved, making again, but silently, the words Rodríguez spoke.

"In the ríos are alligators with rapacious jaws. Great boa constrictors as thick as your waist twine in the palm trees even as you have seen them in pictures of Adam and Eve. In the jungle pumas roam, and jaguars. Deadly snakes lurk in grass higher than a man's head. The wild peccary with his vicious tusks hides behind the great trees. Every where monkeys chatter and gaudy parrots screech."

"Are there not boys there too, even as there are here?" asked Simón.

Rodríguez bared his teeth to smile.

"But what tough boys! When they are but a year old they are given a sharp knife a foot long on which to finish cutting their teeth, and they will commit murder if this is taken from them."

"I would like to see those babies," said Simon.

Though at night he dreamed of the terrors of the llanos, Simón did not give up the idea of going there. He started to work upon his brother, Vincente—Vincente who could deny him nothing. In the end his wish was granted. But Vincente insisted that they were to go with a proper escort. He, too, knew something of the llanos. It was arranged that a party be sent to meet Simon and his tutor from one of the Bolívar hatos or cattle farms, which were located on these vast plains.

One morning about four o'clock, just when the tropical stars were brightest, Simón was awakened by the tinkling of stirrups

He waved good-bye to Vincente as he made his horse dance

"We are off for the land of the wild bull and the crocodile," he said, waving his hat in the air

For two days Rodriguez and Simón and their little company rode through sugar-cane fields, then the country began to change One morning as they were sipping coffee at a little inn, Rodriguez remarked that this was perhaps the last time they should see a house built of anything more substantial than palm trees At noon they were joined by the llaneros, those strange men of whom Simón for all his brave words was more than half afraid They were indeed a race apart

The first sign of a caravan in the desert is a cloud of dust, so it is also on the great plains of Venezuela Out of this emerged bits of vivid red and blue, and the sound of the galloping of many hoofs thudded louder in their ears The company was advancing with lances held high, gay pennons streamed from them Their small horses, with their curving necks, were like the Arab horses from which they descended. As if a shot had been fired they halted, horses rearing high, it seemed as if they must fall over one another so sudden was the stop A chieftain rode out in front and made a wide gesture with his arm, a sort of salute to the young Bolívar who owned three great ranches on the llanos These men were, in a sense, his own retainers

The chief wore a bright plain handkerchief, pirate fashion, on his head. His ears were decorated by glittering hoops of gold, and below his great bare chest he wore breeches tightly buckled below the knee. Buckskin leggings protected his legs against the thorns of the jungle. These were fastened with silver studs. His feet were bare and with one great toe he held his carved wooden stirrup. Llaneros, Simón soon learned, walk with a peculiar gait, something like a sailor's, as this constant gripping of the stirrup twists the leg. They look down upon a man who walks quite straight. That night in their first camp Simón examined the equipment of these centaurs at his leisure.

The chief showed him his beautiful linen poncho, heavily embroidered, for which he said he had paid sixty pesos. Then he examined his *cobija*, or woollen poncho, bright red inside, dyed with the cochineal, and blue outside, dyed with indigo. It was explained that these colours protected a man from both heat and cold, the red was exposed when it was very hot and the blue, which attracted heat, when it was cold. The poncho, rolled up under the cantle of the saddle, is a house in itself to the *llanero*. He spreads it over his hammock at night, it sheds rain during the wet season and protects him, keeps his weapons dry, and even helps to keep him cool in the burning equatorial sun.

Around the high saddle were slung a series of *bolsas*, or saddlebags, which contained so many needful things that a man might live for weeks and months on his horse, his weapons and his food always

at hand. Besides the long lance which they carried, as a medieval knight might carry his lance in a tournament, every man was armed with a long knife, fifteen inches or over, and a sword of the crusader pattern. The indispensable lasso of rawhide was draped from the saddle.

Simón looked closely at the stirrups. They were extra long, of carved wood, and below them hung triangular pieces of metal, which make a sort of supplementary spur. These seemed unnecessary as each man was equipped with a single spur, the largest Simón had ever seen. This was tied to the bare foot with thongs of rawhide.

Another man showed him his fine hammock, which was carried in a roll on the horse's back along with the poncho. This hammock was very gay with fringe and stripes. He said he had paid thirty pesos for it.

Simón and Rodríguez spent a whole day bargaining for equipment, at the end of it they looked like centaurs themselves.

Simón said to himself, "No one shall suspect that I was not born to this life. I may break my neck, but I shall ride with the best of them!"

He had given his horse to one of the servants who was riding back to far-off San Mateo. He was now mounted on a small, fast, and vicious animal, a wild horse of the llanos. During the first days he was glad of the soft cover of llama wool which softened his saddle. It was the only luxury a true llanero permitted himself.

They had entered the jungle. The air was steamy

with vapour and seemed itself to be coloured green. Vegetation filled every space. First grass so rank that it looked more blue than green, and giant weeds and brambles out of which grew the unfortunate smaller trees which could not reach the light. Thick among these were the gigantic trunks of the vast trees which reached high up into the sky, their trunks made a broken nave of disordered columns. All these were thickly draped with vines and creepers, some of them thicker than ship's cables, and so covered with heavy smelling orchids and other great unhealthy looking blooms that the very structure of the tree trunks was hidden from view. Simón thought of the many beasts which Rodríguez had said were hidden in the jungle. Anything might be lurking not more than three feet away. They themselves moved forward only because the llaneros who accompanied them cut a way with machetes—long, sharp swords—before their horses.

Of all the llanero troop only two zambos remained with them, the others had ridden away to carry word of a great impending rodeo to the hatos which were located within fifty miles. Once a year a round up of the wild cattle was necessary, to brand them and to pick prime steers for market.

Simón remembered Rodríguez' description of one of these and he shivered.

"It will be fun," he told himself.

But there was not time now to think about it. The chatter of monkeys was incessant—monkeys seen and monkeys unseen. The first sort crept down trees and pointed rudely at the men, saying things to each

other which seemed intended to poke fun at them. The monkey thus addressed often covered his mouth with his hand, while his eyes twinkled, as if he did not want to laugh in the faces of the horsemen. The vivid colours of parrots flashed against the deep green, and their cries and shrieks mingled with the voices of the monkeys

From a tree far overhead a giant sloth swung and yawned. Simón caught a little kinkajou to keep for a pet. The little fellow did not seem afraid of him; in fact, the wildness of this primeval jungle was so little disturbed that the life within it had not yet learned to fear men. All living things seemed, like the monkeys, to be astonished only. Birds and parrots alighted on the horses' backs. The kinkajou rode with Simón for nearly half a day, but then when he was not looking it bit through the thong which tied it to his saddle and he saw its bushy tail vanish into the green.

At night the men made camp, very carefully beating the ground for snakes. Hammocks were hung between trees, and ponchos over the hammocks as a protection against the myriads of insects and vampire bats. One man stayed awake all night to watch that none of these attacked the horses. Simón's horse watched for snakes more carefully than he did. Once they saw a peccary blunder away through the thicket. On the third day it was good to see the dense forest thinning perceptibly, and then to emerge on to the vast pampas of the Apure River.

Here sharp grass grew as high as their heads when mounted. It was like ordinary grass but enlarged as

if by magic. The blades were so sharp that they cut the horses. Presently the country became more open and they saw stupendous mountains in the distance. As they came nearer, these looked more and more like ruined castles. Under the mountains were caves—caves which the llaneros said had no end. A stone dropped into a chasm could never be heard to touch bottom.

"That is the moriche palm," said Rodriguez, pointing to the trees ahead. "It is one of the most useful trees in Venezuela. You can eat the fruit, make wine of the sap. The juice of the fruit is a good drink, and bread may be made of the pith. Its leaves make thatch for roofs, of the fibre of the trunks fish nets, hammocks, and rope are manufactured. And in the end the hard wood makes durable building material." He also pointed out the *lignum vitæ* tree, whose wood is the hardest in the world.

The men had begun to spur their tired horses, for they were coming to the ranch house. This was nothing more than a big hut roofed with palm thatch, with a corral in front fenced with palm trunks. Inside, the furniture consisted of hammock hooks and antlers of deer and horns of bulls to serve as bureaus and closets. For supper they had meat, maize cakes, and milk. Rodriguez had a drink part guarapo and part aguardiente called—with reason—"carbine." Simón swung himself to sleep in his hammock.

The first thing which caught Simón's eye when he woke in the morning was a baby about a year old playing with a long sharp knife, the tales of Rodri-

guez were true then. He caught hold of his tutor's hammock to swing him awake, and when he opened his eyes Simón pointed to the little boy.

"One thinks only how to protect one's child . . . one should teach him to protect himself . . . to stand the blows of fate, to support both wealth and poverty, to support life . . . in the bitter cold of Iceland, or on the burning rock of Malta . . ."

"Always Rousseau," said Simón, shaking his tutor "You would quote him, even if we were shipwrecked"

"In that case he would be my consolation, as he has been in many past cases and may well be again."

"I want the day to begin. Get up!" said Simón

"You get up!" said Rodríguez, preparing to doze

Simón investigated the life of the young llanero. A baby when it was born was hung from the palm-leaf roof in a bullock's hide. He got very little attention. When he was two he was practising in the corral with his small lasso, trying his skill on dogs and birds. At four he was already mounted and taken out to ride herd. When he was eight it was time that he became a man. Accordingly he was mounted on the back of a wild young bull. Simón saw one little boy trying this. He faced the tail of the bull and held on to it, while his small legs were firmly twisted around the neck of his antagonist. He was whirled round and round. It was expected of him to stick; more than that, he must throw the bull! This he finally managed by twisting the tail, throwing the creature, and finally dragging the tail between the legs; the fallen bull gave no more trouble after this had been done.

Boys a year or so older were put through a sterner test. They must break a wild colt. A good saddle was tightly girthed to the animal and, armed with his chaparro-vine whip, the little boy mounted. He must break his bucking and kicking animal, who frequently bolted. Both boy and colt were often gone a matter of days. In the end, if he had not broken the horse he was whipped by the lasso of his merciless instructor, but if he had tamed him he was a full fledged llanero.

Simón was twelve, the dignity of his years permitted him to skip the wild-bull part of llanero education, but he must, he knew, break a wild colt. In order to tame him, the horse must first be caught from the herds which roamed wild in the plains.

"I do not want too small or too young an animal."

Simón was speaking with dignity to old Sancho, whose skill in catching wild horses was everywhere extolled. As Simón, equipped with a man-size lasso set out with Sancho, the old man explained his method.

"Often it takes two, sometimes three days but in the end I catch a fine horse and his spirit is not broken. These horses are the swiftest. They will help a man when he needs it most."

They had not ridden half a day before they saw the first herd of wild horses. They were galloping at top speed not away from Simón and Sancho but towards them.

"They are too innocent to know fear," explained Sancho.

As they came nearer it was evident that this was a

troop of mares led by a big cream-coloured stallion. The pretty creatures arched their necks and coquetted around the men, the stallion with alert ears standing a little to one side and watching, ready to give the signal for instant flight if his charges were threatened. Stallions, Sancho said, took pride in leading as large a number of mares as possible; they would fight to steal mares from other stallions. Suddenly on some move of Simón's the whole group threw up their heads and galloped away with the indescribable freedom and pride which is only to be seen in the flight of wild horses.

Three days later, by means of inexhaustible patience, Sancho had lassoed, without throwing, a strong young mare for Simón. Sancho had to fire in the air to frighten away the stallion. When they reached the ranch house Simón was riding his still-unbroken mount. All he could say for himself was that she had not been able to throw him. He rode the horse all day every day for a week. In the end she began to obey him, and he was able to teach her the arrowlike charge essential to overtake wild cattle.

One morning they got up long before daylight, when the brilliant morning star called the "Lucero" shed as much light as the northern moon. This was the great day of the rodeo, and it was very necessary to rise early in order to catch the cattle while they were still sleeping.

Several hundred horsemen, Simón and Rodríguez among them, rode to appointed places in the great ring, which was at least fifteen miles in circumference. Each man carried his lasso and his long

garrocha—a spear ten feet long made of the tough palm and pointed by a sharp iron head. Below the head were a series of rings calculated to terrify the animal by rattling in his ears. But the animals were already terrified enough. As the men began to ride closer to the middle of the circle and the first rays of the sun lighted the turbulent scene, all sorts of wild creatures were seen fleeing in mad confusion. The whole picture was almost obscured by a diaper pattern of bright-coloured butterflies. Overhead so many birds had risen—herons, cranes, and ducks—that they seemed to cloud the sun.

Deer, peccaries, wild dogs, and foxes were herded together with the stampeding cattle. The bulls tossed their great heads, some plunged wildly away from the riders, others charged them ferociously. Eight thousand head of cattle were brought into the ever narrowing ring. The wild animals escaped between the horses, but most of the cattle were caught by the expert goads of the riders, who seemed to be everywhere at once. The roaring of the herd and the cries of the llaneros, the dust which rose from the plains transformed the rodeo into a battle scene.

Simón's young horse served him well. He used his goad as dexterously as he could, carried away by the general excitement. And then one animal commanded the attention of all. This was an enormous black bull. He stood at bay, his proud head thrown back and up, his eyes flashing fire, his lip seemed to curl in defiance. He pawed the ground furiously, throwing great sprays of dust over himself and then

lashing it off with his tail; all the time he emitted a sort of subdued roar, like distant but very heavy thunder. He charged with swift and terrible directness at the thickest knot of men over and over again.

"If you prize the skin of your horse, look to your spurs, chico," someone shouted to Simón

The bull was singling him out. Had he, then, decided to deal with the owner of the hat first? Simón couched his spear; others had been unable to stop the animal; he had no hope of doing so. He only hoped that he could keep his seat and make a creditable showing before so many eyes

Roaring louder, the bull charged; he hit and killed two heifers who barred his path, and then he goaded another bull, he wheeled to make another and an unimpeded charge. Suddenly one of the cowboys jumped from his horse. He was an old man with white hair. Now Simón saw that it was Sancho. The instinct of this old man had told him that this bull would not be killed by any man's goad. Dismounted, Sancho seemed sure to be killed. Playing with the red side of his poncho as if it were a cape and he a torreador, he made a bullfight of the scene. In the end, with incredible skill he caught the bull's tail and, making that quick knot known only to South Americans, threw the bull upon the ground and pulled his tail between his legs. Men were preparing to kill the animal when they saw that he was already dead. He could not survive the death of his pride. The boy who watched never forgot the black bull.

Rodriguez and Simón spent several more months

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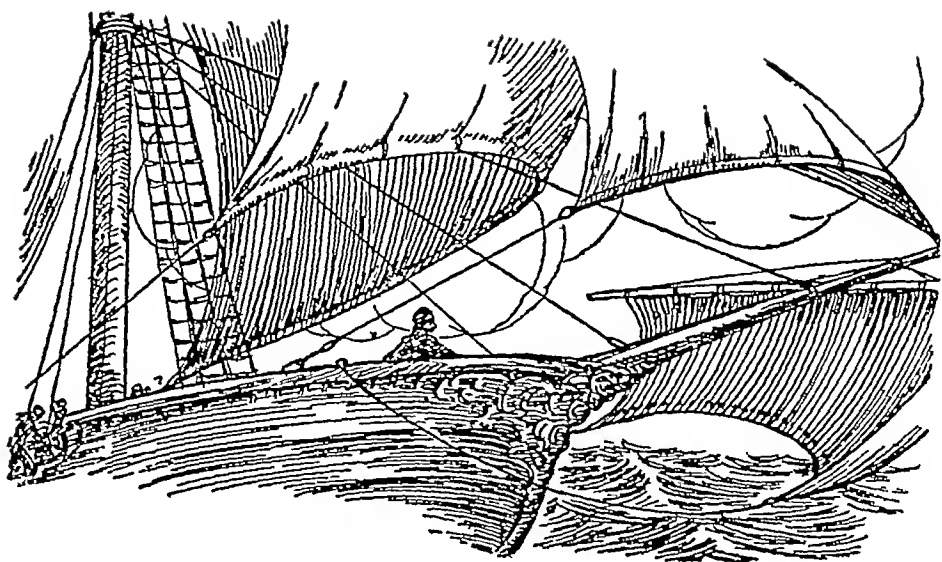
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on the llanos Riding homewards, Simón crossed the rivulet of La Puerta. The boy had no premonition that he was crossing a place which was to be an epic battlefield, that a general was here to be disastrously defeated, and later to be gloriously victorious, least of all that he was himself to be that general. He only knew that he had held his own among the llaneros and earned the name of "Iron Seat." It was by this name that they were to call the young general a few years later.





III

SPAIN

SIMÓN AND RODRIGUEZ were nearly ridden over by a party of Spanish soldiers. They were returning to Caracas from the llanos and were climbing down the green mountains which form a barrier around the city. Rodriguez characteristically had refused to move to one side of the road.

"Where do you suppose these fellows are going in such desperate haste?" asked Rodriguez, more to himself than as if expecting an answer.

Just then a priest rode out of a side path on a white mule. He explained the soldiers. There had been an uprising against the Spaniards in the Valley of Curimagua, the leader was José Chirriños. He was now in chains in the prison at Caracas, as this uprising

Simón learned to speak almost perfect French from this old soldier. They had only one subject, the young general who they sincerely believed was leading France to freedom and to victory.

Rodriguez had already told him of the main events of the American Revolution.

"It was a victory coming out of a great defeat—a defeat which lasted almost seven years. Washington lost New York and Boston, two of the three most important cities of the North American continent, almost as soon as the United States had proclaimed her independence," he said.

"He camped at the foot of a craggy mountain which rises sheer from the shores of a wide river, called the Hudson, there he awaited his chance." He told the boy of Washington's despair at Valley Forge of his difficulties with Congress, how his troops went unpaid and ragged in the bitter cold of a North American winter, and how the cause of American independence itself would have probably been lost but for General Washington's faith and perseverance against almost insuperable odds.

Simón at that time did not know the full story of Washington, but before many years had passed he was to know all that any man then living could know. He was a lifelong hero to the South American. When George Washington's stepson many years later sent him a miniature painted by Stuart of the first President of the United States, he wore it ever afterwards around his neck.

Lafayette wrote a letter which accompanied this gift in which he said "Of all men living, and even

of all men in history, Bolívar is the one to whom Washington would have preferred to send this gift "

But the boy who was growing up at the foot of the Andes had no premonition of these things. Washington was a hero to him as he is a hero to us to-day. But to this boy he was more than that, he was the inspiration of his life

Two years went by. Simón noticed that his tutor spent more and more time away from San Mateo. When they went to live in Caracas he was hardly ever in the house. Simón was left to read or to idle alone. The boy heard the rumours which were on everyone's lips. Three famous intellectuals of Spain had conspired against the crown. They had been sent over the ocean to the waterside prison at La Guana. But Rodríguez never mentioned these things to him. Yet he was never tired of talking of the rights of man. Why did not the case of these men interest his tutor?

One day when Simón was riding alone he came upon a gathering of men in a wood at the back of the city. One came up to him and told him that they wished to be alone, and asked him not to mention to anyone that he had chanced upon their gathering. Simón was almost sure that he had seen Rodríguez among them. But he did not mention his suspicions. He felt hurt. They had always been so open with each other; he felt now that Rodríguez was drawing away from him.

For three days Rodríguez had been gone!

Then Judge Sanz came to the house, he hardly saw Simón as he asked, "Where is your uncle, Don Carlos?"

His uncle was playing chess with a priest in the great room which opened into the patio

"Listen," began Judge Sanz, addressing Don Carlos without salutation "It is about Rodriguez. Two men whom you may or you may not know, Gual and España, have conspired to free the three political prisoners from Spain That is not all, they have planned a complete revolution They have even a flag That is not all They have been discovered They will be punished with terrible severity They have been meeting in a wood outside the town That is not all Rodriguez is one of this band!"

"Is he in custody?" asked Don Carlos

"I do not know"

"We must do all we can for him," said Don Carlos

Judge Sanz and Don Carlos did not abandon their friend, they saved him from a frightful fate, but he was banished from Venezuela, and the boy Simón was never to see his tutor again It was the man Simón Bolívar who was once more to share his life with the friend of his childhood, but that was to be on the other side of the world.

Seven of the conspirators were condemned to death—a most horrible one, for Spain used both torture and horror to subdue her subjects The savage cruelty of Spanish punishment was seen by all Thus Spain sought to suppress the thought of political liberty from the hearts of her people who were living in a new world These things might have terrified the boy of fourteen Instead he felt pity, then rage, that those who had died so bravely should have died in vain

After these things had happened, Simón could no longer bear to stay in Caracas. He rode away to San Mateo. Here, by right of inheritance as a Bolívar, he was entitled to a certain military rank roughly corresponding to colonel of militia. He threw himself heart and soul into military studies. He became a cadet in his father's regiment, the Whites of Aragua.

For two years he applied himself to the study of military science. That he learned much his life testifies. We may marvel at a future general who was to claim the admiration of both the Old and the New World being trained in the newly tamed wilderness of Venezuela. The mighty Andes themselves taught Simón Bolívar to be a soldier.

For the lonely boy who rode back to San Mateo was never seen again. In his place, in two years' time, a young lieutenant emerged, splendid in a uniform tailored in France, with breeches as white as the eternal snow on the Andes and gold lace which glittered in the glaring sun of Caracas. This young officer loved to dance, both the fandangos of his native country and the formal minuets of Europe. Simón had never left his native land, but it was easy to see that he was already a man of the world. A young man who might hold his own in any society, be it at home or in the most sophisticated court of Europe.

Emerging from the military training of San Mateo into the wider circle of Caracas, he made the reacquaintance of his family. His cousins, the Aristigueta girls, loved to dance as much as he did

They were delighted with such a smart young officer who was so willing to lead them through the measures of the minuet. Somehow or other the fame of the young lieutenant reached even to Madrid, where an uncle of Simón's, who was only a little older than himself, was basking in the favours of the Spanish court.

This man was Estaban Palacio. He wrote to Don Carlos and suggested that it might be a good thing if his young kinsman was to come to Madrid for the purpose of finishing his education. Estaban himself was in the capital trying to restore two titles which were supposed to belong to the Bolívar family, "Marqués de Bolívar" and "Visconde de Cocorote." But while he placed his suit before the Royal Tribunal he was tasting the sweets of the Spanish capital.

Lieutenant Bolívar was now seventeen years old. He set about persuading his Uncle Carlos that a trip to Madrid was almost essential to the proper finishing of his education. As usual Don Carlos was not too hard to convince and on January 19, 1799 Simon boarded the brigantine *San Ildefonso* at the port of La Guaya.

The brigantine made a leisurely trip to Spain. Her first port of call was Vera Cruz in Mexico. There she was delayed for seven weeks long enough for the young traveller to ride to Mexico City, see the sights and talk over and compare Mexican politics with those of Venezuela. There had been uprisings and much unrest there too and Bolívar is said to have used some strong republican language to the Spanish Viceroy of Mexico.

The *San Ildefonso* called next at Havana, where Bolívar visited the Governor. There also he looked into the conditions of the colony. He made friends with every one. People were already beginning to tell him what they really thought, to confide in him. It was not merely that the boy was handsome and rich, or that his bearing was so correctly martial; there was in his dark bright eyes a sympathy for all the world. Mixed with that gallant pride of race which is in all men of Spanish blood there was this strange love of the common man, an attitude which permitted him to be arrogant with kings yet made him unite himself in sympathy with the poor and with the oppressed.

The first Simón Bolívar had sailed from Bilbao for the New World in 1589 to become a royal official of the Province of Caracas. Now, two hundred and ten years later, his descendant landed at the same port. There for the first time he saw a carriage with wheels. It was, in fact, the stage-coach which was to take him to Madrid.

In the capital he was greeted warmly by his Uncle Estaban and by another very fashionable young man whose lodging his uncle was sharing. This was Manuel Mallo, the current favourite of the Queen of Spain. He had even to a certain extent been able to overcome the disfavour in which South Americans were usually held in the capital.

Maria Louisa of Spain was calling them, in affectionate ridicule, her "Indians." These young men were all rich, without exception they rode magnificently, excelled at dart throwing. Then a fashion-

able game in the capital, dart throwing had always been an Indian skill, it had been developed on the llanos of Venezuela. The South Americans showed, too, a certain aptitude for fencing. In all of them there was that hurt pride, that desire to excel, which was engendered by the feeling that they were considered inferior by the native-born Spanish. It was the same feeling which made Washington rage when for no reason except that he was American born he was demoted from the rank of colonel to that of captain. Washington was, he knew, as well descended, as full of good English blood, as the English born officers who ranked him. So it was these South Americans. Had not the first Bolívar who left Spain left his high place at court also?

Mallo's lodgings were the resort of all the important South Americans in Madrid. There was much talk of the wrongs which were inflicted on their unhappy homelands. Hurt pride mingled with nobler feelings, the beginnings of a search for national justice. But they were young and they were very gay.

Simón Bolívar became almost an intimate of the Prince of Asturias, Ferdinand, who was to become king of Spain. Ignoring caution, with a longing for personal triumph, Simón vanquished the Prince at the game of darts. Simón was especially skilful at this game, which he had learned with Rodríguez during their sojourn on the llanos. Queen Maria Louisa watched the young men play. She could not help admiring the grace of the young Venezuelan. But Ferdinand was really furious. It seemed that

he was about to strike his subject with the lance he was so clumsy at throwing

But the Queen came running out of the bower from which she had been watching the game. She was suddenly imperious

"Hold, Ferdinand!" she said. "You will have to learn to play better if you would vanquish this young Indian "

Simón saw several courtiers looking at him with a sort of horror. Must one, then, always allow the Prince to win a game? He saw the expression of scorn on the faces of those who had crowded around, he half heard some slighting remark about himself and caught the word "Indian." The Prince and the group who fawned around him laughed. No one was brave enough to say "Good-afternoon" to him as he made his way towards the gates of the palace grounds. He knew that he might never go back. At first he felt a sense of mortification, as if he had been inexcusably rude or bad-mannered

Then as he walked alone in the deepening twilight he asked himself, "What, after all, have I done? Played a game and won it fairly. No man, not even a future king, shall make me ashamed of that!"

That night-after the three young men had dined, Bolívar was telling the story of his afternoon at the palace. A young Capuchin monk entered the room and sat silently in one corner. Mallo offered him a cup of wine, but he refused. Bolívar was telling about the Queen's intervention on his behalf. The monk arose and came towards the table and stood in the light of the tall tapers. The cowl fell back. It

was the Queen of Spain! The young men retired, leaving Mallo with his queen

Estaban said, "I do not like this. The Queen has tired of other favourites. Godoy would give every thing but his life to ruin Mallo."

Bolívar knew what was troubling his young relative. They were all tolerated here in Madrid because of Mallo, the South American who had so miraculously succeeded in winning the Queen's high regard. If he fell from favour, they all fell. They would all once more be "monkeys" or "Indians." That term which was now half an endearment would turn suddenly to an insult, it would mean "savage." The temperature of courts is ever wont to blow hot and cold, and when a court is ruled by a queen the sudden reverses are even more extreme.

Then, too, all the Queen's previous favourites were constantly plotting against Mallo, a South American upstart in their eyes, a man they could unite in hating. Chief among these was Manuel Godoy, who only a short while before had ruled Spain as a virtual dictator.

It was nearly dawn. Bolívar was riding wildly, as he always rode through Retiro Park in Madrid. At this quiet hour he could almost imagine himself in the virgin solitudes of a South American forest.

Without warning four mounted guards with bayonets set came from their ambush in the trees and lined themselves across the bridle path! Simon's horse reared so straight and high that he nearly fell backwards from his precarious balance. Then loaded

by the long llanero spurs of his rider, the horse charged—into the bayonets Bolívar guided him between the two centie guards, who drew aside. They had not expected anything but tame submission Bolívar, with time now to think, gave rein to his flying horse. Why should he escape, why run away? He had committed no crime How dared they set guards upon him? He wheeled and rode back

He found not four guards this time but a dozen. He had ridden into the centre of a cordon Though they were so many, they were afraid of this rider and his fearless horse Young Bolívar, in the pale pink-light of the coming dawn, sitting his rearing horse, looked like an equestrian statue in the park, the guards like admirers. But that was seeming, only

“Are you dogs to set upon a peaceful citizen in the dead of night?” asked Bolívar while the bayonets pricked the sensitive skin of his horse, ringing him around with twelve sharp points

One seized his horse’s bridle, jerked it cruelly Simón was captured

The leader said, “I regret, Señor, to cause you inconvenience. It has been ordered that you be searched ”

“I demand to know by whose order ”

“By the order of Manuel Godoy, the Prince of Peace ”

Bolívar soon understood Manuel Godoy, the Queen’s favourite before the brief ascendancy of Mallo, who had been virtual dictator of a nation

where the King counted for nothing at all, had returned to power. It was to warn Mallo, perhaps, that all was over that the Queen had come in disguise that night. Or more probably there had been a quarrel. The guards did not say for what reason they were politely but thoroughly searching Simón, but he guessed that it was because, as had been hinted to him before, the Queen suspected him as a go-between in an imaginary love affair of Mallo's. The Queen was madly jealous.

"Thank you, Señor, now you are free to proceed," said the captain of the guards.

His horse, rearing again, faced the captain, steel shod hoofs just missed his face.

"I shall not trouble myself to avenge this insult on you, my little captain," said Bolívar. "I shall avenge myself on Spain herself."

"We shall have to leave this city," said Estaban. "Perhaps we ought to pack up and leave for Paris this very night."

"I cannot," said Simón.

"What is there to keep you?" asked Estaban.

"Something of the greatest importance to me."

But Simón did not say what it was.

Simón went to live with the good Marques de Ustáritz, where he changed his life completely. He went into seclusion and devoted himself to his studies. He was able to perfect the French which he had begun with the old soldier in Caracas so that he could speak and write it as well as his own language. He studied English and Italian also and went on

with his military studies. This was a rather sudden change, but there was a cause for it.

The Marqués had a niece, María Teresa del Toro y Alaysa. Her father, Bernardo del Toro, came from one of the oldest families in Caracas; but he had been living for many years in Bilbao, where María had been born. The family were now in Madrid trying to settle their affairs, which had been upset by the fall of Manuel Mallo. Simón had fallen deeply in love with this gentle and beautiful girl. In his dreams he saw her in the hacienda of San Mateo and in the great house in Caracas. He told her stories of her country beyond the sea, that country which she had never seen.

But this beautiful and tranquil life was not to last. News came that Estaban had been imprisoned, it was rumoured that Mallo had been secretly murdered. Estaban sent word from prison warning Simón to leave the country at once. Perhaps the Prince Ferdinand was in a position to avenge himself for losing a game of darts.

Simón went to Bernardo del Toro and formally asked for the hand of his daughter. The old man refused him as a matter of course.

"How old are you, my son?" he asked.

"Nineteen," replied Bolívar.

"Come back again, if you have not changed your mind when you are twenty-one."

Nor could Simón move him further.

Another letter came from Estaban. He pointed out that Simón must leave Madrid at once. He would be in danger to his host if he remained. So

where the King counted for nothing at all, had returned to power. It was to warn Mallo, perhaps, that all was over that the Queen had come in disguise that night. Or more probably there had been a quarrel. The guards did not say for what reason they were politely but thoroughly searching Simón, but he guessed that it was because, as had been hinted to him before, the Queen suspected him as a go-between in an imaginary love affair of Mallo's. The Queen was madly jealous.

"Thank you, Señor, now you are free to proceed," said the captain of the guards.

His horse, rearing again, faced the captain, steel shod hoofs just missed his face.

"I shall not trouble myself to avenge this insult on you, my little captain," said Bolívar. "I shall avenge myself on Spain herself."

"We shall have to leave this city," said Estaban. "Perhaps we ought to pack up and leave for Paris this very night."

"I cannot," said Simón.

"What is there to keep you?" asked Estaban.

"Something of the greatest importance to me."

But Simón did not say what it was.

Simón went to live with the good Marqués de Ustáritz, where he changed his life completely. He went into seclusion and devoted himself to his studies. He was able to perfect the French which he had begun with the old soldier in Caracas so that he could speak and write it as well as his own language. He studied English and Italian also and went on

with his military studies. This was a rather sudden change, but there was a cause for it.

The Marqués had a niece, María Teresa del Toro y Alaysa. Her father, Bernardo del Toro, came from one of the oldest families in Caracas; but he had been living for many years in Bilbao, where María had been born. The family were now in Madrid trying to settle their affairs, which had been upset by the fall of Manuel Mallo. Simón had fallen deeply in love with this gentle and beautiful girl. In his dreams he saw her in the hacienda of San Mateo and in the great house in Caracas. He told her stories of her country beyond the sea, that country which she had never seen.

But this beautiful and tranquil life was not to last. News came that Estaban had been imprisoned; it was rumoured that Mallo had been secretly murdered. Estaban sent word from prison warning Simón to leave the country at once. Perhaps the Prince Ferdinand was in a position to avenge himself for losing a game of darts.

Simón went to Bernardo del Toro and formally asked for the hand of his daughter. The old man refused him as a matter of course.

"How old are you, my son?" he asked.

"Nineteen," replied Bolívar.

"Come back again, if you have not changed your mind when you are twenty-one."

Nor could Simón move him further.

Another letter came from Estaban. He pointed out that Simón must leave Madrid at once. He would be in danger to his host if he remained. So

in the garden at the back of the Ustáritz house he kissed María good bye. He promised to come back. They would be married. Nothing on earth should part them.

In Paris the news of the Treaty of Amiens was making the capital a place of rejoicing. Everywhere the name of Napoleon was extolled. He was the hero who had saved the French Republic. Simón cheered with the rest—until one day, about seven weeks after he arrived, a letter came for him. His Uncle Estaban was out of prison, he might now safely return to Madrid—and to María. On his arrival Simón won his first victory. María's father consented to their marriage.

They were married in Madrid late in the month of May. Later the brigantine *San Ildefonso* steered her course westwards out of the harbour of Bilbao, on board were Señor and Señora Simón Bolívar.

They were welcomed at the port of La Guaira when the vessel landed them there in July. There was to be a month of public festivity in the city of Caracas in honour of the marriage of one of her favourite sons to the niece of the Marqués del Toro. But, climbing over the rough mountain road which led to Caracas, the young Spanish born bride saw a thing of ill omen. It was the whitened skull of José España, the patriot, swinging still in its iron cage.

Like the Spanish, the citizens of Caracas never go to bed until dawn if there is anything to keep them up. Now Caracas was filled each night with the buzzing noise of gaiety, native music was played

on the guitaí, the tambour, and the maraca—that Indian instrument, made of a calabash gourd, which is half drum and half rattle. Simón taught María all the intricacies of the fandango. When they were tired of dancing themselves they watched the characteristic dances of the country being performed by citizens of every colour. There were the folias, the capuchin, and the galeron to watch. Perhaps María felt a little afraid of these strange people, many of them almost black and still more partly Indian. But her husband seemed to know every one in Caracas by name.

However, he was anxious to take his bride to San Mateo, the beautiful hacienda which he loved. The month of festivity was ended at last and, taking the servants Matea and Hipólita with them, Simón and María rode away towards the great peaks of the Andes.

At first he would not believe that she was ill. They had been living at San Mateo only a few months.

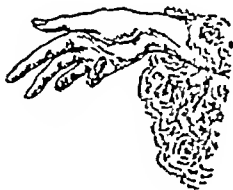
He stood looking at María, so still and white, lying in a hammock which he rocked gently. Hipólita pulled him away.

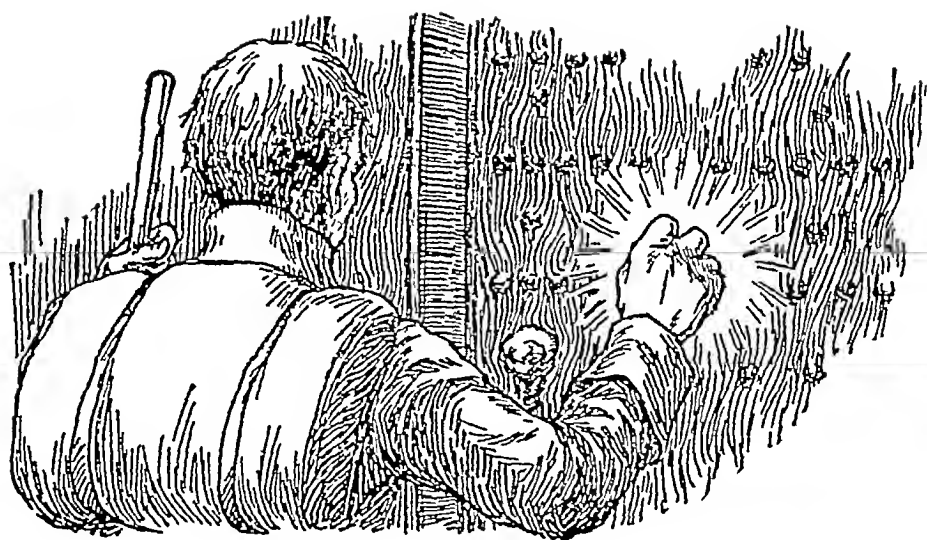
"Señor," she said, "our young lady has caught the fever!"

Simón saw that what she said was true. They were many miles from any doctor. He did not hesitate. A litter was built of a hammock swung on a pole. Men were selected to take turns in carrying it. In this he laid his wife; he wanted to take her back to Caracas, where she might have the best

medical attention. Sadly he rode beside the girl, whose eyes were always closed. The procession never stopped. At night servants went ahead with flaring torches. Fifty miles over the rough trails of the mountains. Caracas at last.

Most gently he laid María in the great mahogany bed niche draped with deep rose-coloured brocade which had been his mother's. María died on January 22, 1803.





IV

DESTINY

SIMÓN BOLÍVAR had been married just eight months when his wife was torn from him by death. She was beautiful and gentle, so deeply in love with him that she saw no one else nor had any thoughts apart from him; the perfect foil for his Spanish pride and masculine ardour. In happiness they had planned a life, to be lived, perhaps, chiefly at San Mateo but still a life wherein the somewhat vague stirrings of patriotic feeling had their part. Simón, at twenty already a man of importance and wealth, would use his influence for the good of his country, to free slaves and to bring about more liberal thought; but above everything else there was the reality of the tangible happiness of their life together. Now in a

clap of thunder, in an earthquake, this was gone for ever. He was twenty, but he felt that his life had ended. He was broken by the sudden fierceness of this unbearable pain. Everything he had lived for was suddenly lost. It was true his life had ended—one life.

We deal now with another Simón Bolívar. A young man still numbed and groping returned over the sea to Bilbao and fell into the arms of his father-in-law. We see him in Madrid talking late into the night with his countryman Francisco Zea, the companion of the unfortunate Narriño—the New Granadan who had been sent to the prison at Cádiz in chains for daring to publish Paine's *Rights of Man* in Spanish. In the group to which Zea belonged was also Bolívar's kinsman José Félix Ribas, who always at this time and ever afterwards wore the little red liberty cap of the French Revolution. He was already devoting his life to Liberty, Equality and the Brotherhood of Man. Simón listened. He talked much too. But at this time his destiny was not yet clear to him. It hovered over his head unseen.

These men talked as Jefferson, Richard Henry Lee and Patrick Henry had talked in the old Raleigh Tavern at Williamsburg, Virginia. Like those other patriots, they were paving the way to the freedom of a continent.

We see him also in Paris at the salon of his cousin Fanny Villars, meeting Mme de Staël, Mme Récamier, Talleyrand, Beauharnais (the son of Josephine Bonaparte), Marshal Ney, and the scientist Baron von Humboldt. Humboldt had returned

from his expedition over the Andes from Venezuela to the Pacific, he was the great pioneer in the natural science of South America and of Mexico. Bolívar talked of politics with him too.

"Is my country ready for independence?" he asked.

"In my opinion yes," replied Humboldt. "But it would take a leader of the first order to accomplish this "

"Where will this leader come from?" asked Bolívar.

"He will arise in South America," prophesied the scientist

Even yet, however, the young man could see nothing of the figure of destiny which floated like an angel over his head.

Then on December 2, 1804, Napoleon had himself crowned Emperor. In a room high up and dark a great slovenly musician tore up a score. It was Beethoven, who tore up the score of the *Eroica* Symphony when he heard of the coronation of Napoleon. A man had been crowned in glory, a hero had fallen into dust.

Napoleon's glory had been born out of the French Revolution. All over Europe and in the New World also people had begun by believing in him as a popular hero, saviour of mankind. In spite of the increasing greed for personal power which they could no longer ignore, many still thought of him as a standard-bearer marching for the rights of man. So had Bolívar thought of him when, alone in the military school at San Mateo, he eagerly read all that concerned this young officer whose career was

shaping itself before the eyes of the whole world And so, too, had Beethoven thought of Napoleon As he worked on his score he called it the Emperor Symphony, it was full of the martial music, yet it was full of other motifs which symbolized the high ideals of the patriots who had been making history on both sides of the great Atlantic Now, as Napoleon crowned himself Emperor of France, he betrayed all those high minded men who had believed in him Bolívar, in Paris, was seeing glory, the pinnacle of military glory Or was it the end of glory? In rage Bolívar closed the shutters of his apartment He would not look at the coronation Destiny was rustling her wings.

And then this mysterious figure took on a very strange disguise, as such figures are wont to do Destiny appeared in the unkempt person of Rodríguez, his beloved tutor Simón gave up his splendid suite at a fashionable hotel He and Rodríguez took modest lodgings and Bolívar took the books out of his friend's bulging, ragged pockets Simón began to read them once more Then in the manner of pilgrims they took a walking trip, over the Alp into Italy Southward in Italy to Rome And now her great moment occurred—Bolívar saw Destiny

"I swear by the God of my forefathers, I swear by my native land, that I shall never allow my hands to be idle, nor my soul to rest, until I have broken the shackles which bind us to Spain"

Kneeling on Monte Sacro, kneeling, where the plebs of ancient Rome had knelt, Simon Bolívar swore this oath.

The sonorous sound of the words spoken in Spanish died away in the clear air. Simón returned to the everyday world of men. He was, he remembered, twenty-three years old, a lieutenant in the Venezuelan army taking a walking trip with an eccentric old man. A reaction succeeded his exalted moment, but he had sworn an oath and neither his hands nor his soul would rest while he was not upon the purpose he had sworn to follow.

He returned at once to Venezuela, stopping in Paris just long enough to say good-bye to his pretty cousin Fanny Villars, who had done so much to make his stay in the capital worth while. He had become a figure there in his dark green cape with the high gold-embroidered collar. She was very sorry to see him go, Simón Bolívar was a decided social asset.

Thomas Jefferson was then President of the United States. Bolívar's ship landed him in Boston and he travelled southwards through Jefferson's America, stopping in New York and Philadelphia and finally sailing for Venezuela from Baltimore. Bolívar had seen much of the United States. He had especially enjoyed New York City.

Journeys in those days were slow. In each stage-coach, when these could be had, a traveller met and talked to all occupants, or when he rode the lonely trails through the woods he was apt to have a companion. Bolívar talked to every one as he always did, everywhere. He thought of his own country. He thought of Washington lying in undying glory at Mount Vernon, of Jefferson guiding his great new

SIMON BOLIVAR

~~country~~ with such a sure hand in Washington Sailing southwards from Baltimore, he saw that here was, after all, nothing mystical in his oath. What these men had done others also might accomplish. He did not as yet see himself as a great leader, he determined only, by all the means which should come to his hand, to further the cause of the freedom of his country.

Four years went by. Simón was now a colonel of militia. The Crown Prince of Spain, Ferdinand, whom Bolívar had beaten at darts, had been forced to renounce his right to the throne of Spain, while Napoleon's brother Joseph ruled the country weakly, but when the news of these changes reached Venezuela, the French deputies who came to rule were chased back to their ships. Venezuela wanted to be independent of Spain, but she certainly did not propose to be ruled by the French. Reaction against the French went so far that the cry "Long live Ferdinand the Seventh!" was heard in the streets. Then in Spain the Regency was established.

A strange proclamation was issued by the Spanish Regency to the American colonies, it read in part

"From this moment, Spanish Americans, you are elevated to the dignity of free men. You are not now burdened under a yoke much more unbearable because of the great distance from the seat of power. You shall no more be looked upon with indifference, harassed by greed, destroyed by ignorance. Your destinies now do not depend upon ministers, nor viceroys, nor governors, you are in your own hands."

But these fine words stood all alone; whoever was their author must have fallen at once from what power he had possessed, the new Captain General who arrived seemed never to have heard of them. This was Don Vincente Emperán, who brought with him, as Inspector General of the army, Don Ferdinando del Toro, brother of the Marqués del Toro. Don Ferdinando was more than a relative of Bolívar's deceased wife, he was himself a more or less open believer in freedom for the colonies.

Emperán could see how things were going. He was afraid of the growing unrest. It was Holy Thursday, April 10, 1810, the thirty-fifth anniversary of the battle on Lexington green. The Captain General was going to Mass accompanied by his guard of honour. A group of patriots accosted him before the steps of the Cathedral. They asked him with formal courtesy to come with them to the town hall to discuss the advisability of forming a representative government in Venezuela.

The minute was tense, the Captain General did not want to yield, but he did not quite dare to refuse. He compromised.

"Gentlemen, I shall discuss this with you after Mass," he said.

He turned towards the Cathedral, passed his guards, who drew up in two defiles on either side of the steps; and saluted.

He reached the top step. Quite suddenly a young hot-head, Francisco Salías, rushed up the steps.

"We demand a new government!" he shouted. He snatched from the Governor's hand the sceptrelike

walking stick which was his official insignia of office. "Come with us," ordered Salías, who was now backed by several of his comrades.

The Governor came. Slowly he walked down the steps of the Cathedral *His guard failed to salute* The first step towards independence had been taken by Venezuela.

Bolívar was a colonel of militia, his allegiance was now formally as it had always been privately, to the State of Venezuela. He addressed the Council, that body of citizens which, like the Continental Congress, was a little bewildered by its new and almost unlimited power. Thus Council did not proclaim official independence, even though Emperán had officially declared, "I do not care to rule." The Council lagged behind popular feeling—there were many opinions. Finally it declared for a vague allegiance to Ferdinand VII, but for self government.

Bolívar pointed out the great necessity of enlisting the help of foreign governments. They would need friends to resist the wrath of Spain. A commission he urged, ought to be sent to England at once. When the Council explained that there was no money for things like that, the Colonel offered to pay all expenses from his own pocket. That made all the difference.

Bolívar and López Méndez, another flower of the aristocracy of Caracas, sailed on the British man-of-war *General Wellington*. They took a secretary, one of Bolívar's talented tutors—Andrés Bello, one of the foremost poets of his time and country. The *General Wellington* had not merely happened into a

Venezuelan port; it was part of the fleet, commanded by Admiral Cochane, which had been cruising in South American waters, proof of England's interest.

The Council forbade Bolívar only one thing: *he was not to go to see General Francisco Miranda*, who was then living in retirement in London. At about the same time Juan Vincente Bolívar sailed for the United States on a similar mission

Bolívar was courteously received by the Marquis of Wellesley, the brother of the Iron Duke of Wellington; the Marquis was then Secretary of Foreign Affairs. In addressing him Bolívar used the French which he spoke so eloquently. He set forth the cause of his country; pleaded for armed assistance to back up her declared independence, for a fleet to free her coasts of the Spanish blockade. López Mendez echoed the words of Bolívar. The Marquis listened politely to the end

Then he said, "But, sir, your instructions say nothing of Independence; the Council of Caracas here plainly recognises the authority of Ferdinand VII of Spain "

Bolívar did not allow himself to blink, though afterwards he admitted that he had not read his instructions. He replied that in effect, yes, they did recognise the nominal authority of Ferdinand, but it would be wiser to face facts now. Independence was sure to come very soon; war with Spain was inevitable.

The Marquis bowed the young men out. His Majesty's Government would reply to the Commissioners, he said.

Simón Bolívar sat alone in his lodgings, before a Chippendale desk, biting on the end of a quill pen. Somehow in that cocksure, rather supercilious dignity which is so common with the English aristocracy, the Marquis of Wellesley had made him feel rather young. He was not young, he reminded himself that he was twenty-seven. He had been a man ever since he had been made a lieutenant in the Whites of Aragua when he was almost seventeen. Also, as the English sometimes do, in a very subtle way the Marquis had made him feel that, after all, Venezuela was not such a very important country.

The Marquis did not realise it, but he had met a much more stubborn pride than his own. Spanish pride which ran in Simón's blue blood and the pride of a new race, indigenous to a country which for more than three hundred years had been shut away from the world. This was the same kind of pride which had prompted the staid citizens of Boston town to throw English tea into their harbour.

But Simón was realistic, he might rage under the polite aloofness of the Foreign Secretary but he must admit to himself that he had not accomplished his mission. He dipped the pen in the ink and wrote some very able letters for publication. They set forth aptly the case for Venezuelan independence. He appealed directly to the English people. At least two of these letters were published one in the *Edinburgh Review* and one in the *London Morning Chronicle*.

He was not surprised at its contents when, a few days later, the answer of the Foreign Secretary ar-

lived. His Majesty's Government would graciously help Venezuela defend herself against France (the enemy of England), it would be pleased to consider any grievances the country might have. The issue of independence was completely ignored.

Then he reached out and took hold of the wheel of the Venezuelan ship of state, he disobeyed his orders from the Council. He called upon General Francisco Miranda. Miranda knew nothing of Bolívar, but Bolívar knew all about Miranda. So did all Europe. His name was anathema in another place, New York. Ten American soldiers had been put to death in the usual Spanish way and afterwards had their bodies quartered and the pieces hung, in the usual cages, because of him. Others had died in the dungeons of Cartagena.

He received Bolívar with cold dignity, a hauteur which made the demeanour of the Marquis of Wellesley appear familiar by comparison. He offered Simón snuff from an ornate blue-enamelled gold box.

"Thank you," said Simón, "I do not indulge, but, sir, that is a very beautiful snuffbox."

The stern face of the General relaxed.

"It should be, it was given me by a beautiful woman who was also a queen, Catherine the Great of Russia."

In a glass case behind the General were many medals, most of them French, for General Miranda had been one of Napoleon's great generals—his name was inscribed on the Arch of Stais in Paris. They spoke in French, for although Miranda had, like Bolívar, been born in Caracas and was also of pure

Spanish blood, he had spent his whole life, after those early campaigns of his in Florida and Louisiana, away from his native land. His Spanish was slow and difficult, his accent barbarous. And yet this man was giving his whole life to the cause of South American independence.

He had led a revolt in Cuba, which failed. But afterwards with two Jesuits he had evolved a vast scheme of an Inca Empire, which was to be somewhat democratic in form. This vast plan was to amalgamate Mexico and all South America in one vast independent country. Miranda's first move was to try for the aid of the United States. He told his plan to President Adams, who said that he did not know whether to laugh or to cry. At a later date, when both Jefferson and Madison had declined help, a New York merchant took Miranda seriously, fitted out an expedition and induced two hundred young men to sail with him for South America.

They were met by Spanish men-of-war off the coast of Venezuela and ten of the Americans met with the fate we have described. Later Miranda landed at Coro, a part of Venezuela which had always been more Spanish in its sympathy than the rest of the country. Here the natives were hostile to the man who had come to save them from Spain, whose Spanish they could not understand, and whose name they had never heard. They put a price of thirty thousand pesos on his head. Miranda brokenhearted sailed away to Trinidad where he disbanded his troops. But he still clung to his great idea.

Bolívar probably did not know his whole story

Miranda was living in Grafton Street in London, spending his time in trying to interest the British government in his grandiose plans. Here, thought Bolívar, was a man who was *not* young. A very great general who was interested in nothing but the liberty of the Latin countries in the Americas.

Yet this interview did not go too well. Miranda looked rather askance at the young man who shared a part at least of his great dream; Bolívar was much too practical a person to go all the way with the visionary Miranda. Yet he felt that he was the man for the time and the task. Miranda saw in Bolívar and the situation he presented the great opportunity for which he had been waiting during so many bitter years. He consented to come to Caracas.

Bolívar crossed the Atlantic in His Majesty's corvette *Sapphire* and arrived in Venezuela nine days before the arrival of Miranda.

Bad news awaited him. His brother, Juan Vicente had been lost in a storm at sea on his way home from his mission to the United States. Simón was deeply fond of his brother, they had worked always side by side. There was another sort of bad news too. His wife's uncle, the old Marqués del Toro, had led an expedition against the Spanish at Coro and been badly, even ignominiously, defeated.

General Miranda, being rowed ashore from the British ship which had brought him across the Atlantic, was an imposing if somewhat exotic figure. He stood up in the bow dressed in the uniform of a general of Napoleon's Grand Army of France. His

coat was sky blue and his tight fitting breeches were white, his sash was red, white, and blue. His gold epaulets gleamed in the sun, which also glinted upon the single gold hoop earring that the general wore. His hat was a great half moon worn at an angle on his powdered curls, which were gathered behind into a queue tied with a ribbon.

Greeting him, Bolívar looked small and very neat in the uniform of a colonel of militia. It had not been easy in the short time at his command to prepare the Venezuelan Council for the coming of this delivering general. But now the fiery priest Cortes de Madariaga led the delegation which greeted him.

One of the awkward things had been that Bolívar was not even a member of the Council. After some halts and hitches Madariaga managed to have Miranda commissioned Lieutenant General and to get a seat for him on the Council. But the General was not appreciative. He liked nothing he saw in Venezuela neither the absence of roads nor the appearance of the troops which he reviewed.

He said in their hearing "Where are the armies worthy of the dignity of a general of my position?"

Strangely he was bitterly opposed to men of colour. Bolívar's whole philosophy of liberty for South America had always been based on the frank acceptance of her mixed blood. One colour was not to be allowed to rank another in a country where all were more or less blended.

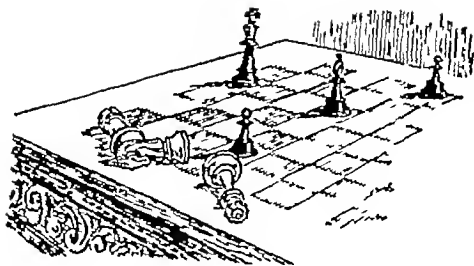
Meanwhile Bolívar organized a society which became of the first national importance the Patriotic Society. Before it he made his first recorded speech.

"What we want," he thundered, "is effective union to unite us in the glorious enterprise of our liberty. Why will those who best know the necessity for union foment schism against it? These quibblings are the unhappy results of old chains. They say that great resolves should be carried out in calmness. Are three hundred years of calm not enough? Does the Congress wish for three hundred years more? Let us lay the cornerstone of South American liberty without fear! To hesitate is to be lost. I propose that a commission from this body carry these sentiments to the sovereign Congress." (The former Council had been absorbed by a Congress.)

It has been said that Washington was the sword of the American Revolution, the eloquent Patrick Henry its tongue, and Jefferson, who created the pattern of the American government, its pen. But Bolívar from this time forth was at once the sword, the tongue, and the pen of South American liberty. As a contemporary said of him, "Your country lives in you." It lived in him before it was an independent country at all and it lived in him when it had suffered the most crushing defeat.

The following day, which happened to be July fourth, the Congress debated the words of Bolívar. Discussion raged all that day, but on the morning of the fifth of July a vote was taken and the President of the Congress "solemnly declared the absolute independence of Venezuela."

The city of Caracas went wild with joy. "Long live Liberty!" was shouted above the din of drums and rattles.



V

DEFEAT

THE YOUNG REPUBLIC of Venezuela was at once attacked, first by loyalist Spanish sympathisers not twenty miles from the capital and then by a serious sedition in Valencia, a city located eighty five miles away in the Andes. This uprising was augmented by slaves and Indians who had been stirred up by Franciscan friars sent from Puerto Rico for the purpose. The emergency gave Miranda his first real command, he was to lead an expedition against Valencia. He had up to this time been a general in name only.

One of his first acts under his new authority was to insist that he would not take Colonel Bolívar with him. The coolness between the old general

and the young colonel who had induced him to cross the ocean was now something very like mutual distrust. Bolívar, during a review of troops, superbly mounted as usual, had caused his horse to rear and dance, very effective when the movement is caught in an equestrian statue but infuriating to Miranda, always a stickler for military rules and regulations. He called Bolívar a "dangerous youth."

Bolívar called him "a tired-out old militario, ignorant of everything for which Venezuela stood. Dangerous youth, indeed! He is himself full of pretence and insatiable vanity!" In the end the old Marqués del Toro, who was also to go along on the expedition, took Bolívar with him. Bolívar went gaily to his first battle. Miranda was like the English General Braddock, he was European to the core; he could not do things in a new way, not even in a new country. He marched over the difficult mountain defiles, back and up to the City of Valencia, cursing the lack of roads.

Even the rich plantations nestling in the verdant valleys between the peaks of the Andes did not please him; passing Bolívar's beautiful estate at San Mateo, he refused to stop for refreshment. The air as they ascended the Andes became more rarefied and the landscape sparkled as if it were a brilliant picture seen through glass.

On the fourth day of their march the Lake of Valencia lay below them. Its crystal water reflected the bright blue sky, it lay like a sapphire surrounded by the densely forested mountains. The lake was framed by a little strand of golden beach and high

green brushes. The artificiality of the scene was accentuated by the strangest natural formation. At one end of the lake a cone of clay rose steeply in the air. It was almost as high as the mountains which surrounded it, but its base was not one-third of its elevation. While the mountains were covered with forest this cone was bare sun baked clay, like a giant piece of pottery. On the top was a fort, though it was difficult to understand how men might climb so high over the incredibly steep sides of the hard cone.

To get to the lake the whole army had to pass through one narrow defile. Suddenly Bolívar saw the muzzles of rifles emerging from the rushes around the lake, but before he could speak they were being attacked. Spaniards were in ambush in all the crevices of the mountains which reared over their heads. Worse, there was the roar of cannon from gunboats hidden in the high reeds which encircled the Lake of Valencia. The sudden severity of the attack, coming as it did out of the smiling serenity of the scene threw men and horses into confusion. But now the enemy was out in the open forming for a charge.

It was Bolívar's moment. His life had been spent in preparation for it. He saw Miranda talk to his staff, hesitate. Bolívar was himself in the rear by the express orders of the General. Now he unsheathed his bright sword. His horse reared high and with a mighty shout of "Long live Liberty! Follow me!" he led a charge.

In the van was his own company of cavalry. The

army followed the charge and the Spanish gave way before its fury. Riding hard with lances set, the patriots pursued the Spanish into the town of Valencia. All was suddenly silent. Bolívar rode up to Miranda and saluted. He saw the look of approval in his general's face, but he had not come at this tense moment for praise. He saluted again.

"General, I fear this quiet."

Miranda did not choose to reply, it was evident that he thought the brilliant charge of the young colonel had caused his natural vanity to increase to the point where he felt he might advise his general. They had come to the main square and were reining in their horses. Then it happened.

From every housetop men were firing, a cannon was uncovered and opened point-blank into the troops. In the confusion Bolívar was everywhere at once. The patriots were rallied, made a show of resistance, but Miranda saw that their position was hopeless. He commanded the bugler to sound the retreat. Once without the city, they surrounded it and laid siege. But the losses had been terrific more than eight hundred patriot soldiers had been killed, and fifteen hundred were wounded. For a month the patriots laid siege to the town.

The Spanish were starving and at last surrendered. A victory, though a very costly one, had come to the patriots. In one respect Miranda showed himself a just soldier, he reversed his opinion of Bolívar. Having seen him in action, the experienced old general could not withhold his admiration, he selected the young officer to carry the tidings of the

victory back to Caracas. In the dispatch Bolívar was cited for bravery.

When he arrived in the capital he found the Congress busy drawing up a constitution modelled on that of the United States, in fact, the new nation had been called the United States of Venezuela.

Bolívar did not know that the captain of a Spanish frigate, whose name was Monteverde, had landed with three hundred and twenty men and was marching inland from Coro, reinforced by royalists from Maracaibo. In his path lay the peaceful village of Carora, a storehouse of Republican supplies. Without orders Monteverde fell upon this village, he turned his ruffians loose to pillage and to murder. He spared neither women nor children. The golden earrings were snatched from the ears of women both dead and alive. Monteverde, now puffed up with easy victory and loot, was looking further, at the rich town of Barquisimeto.

Bolívar saw the people gathering in the Plaza Major, but he reflected that it was Holy Thursday, the second anniversary of the tentative declaration of independence which had followed the abdication of Captain General Emperán, he did not at first know that the people were listening to a ragged refugee from Carora. His orderly came in to tell the bad news about Monteverde. Bolívar buckled on his sword, mounted his horse, and went out into the streets, which were decked for the fiesta to question the refugee. Ladies in high combs and mantillas were being carried about in the streets in gaily painted litters, the Indians had come into the

city from their wild hills, wishing to hear Mass on this important day

His horse stopped dead. There was a roar as if hell had opened, and another and another. A great suffocating cloud of yellow dust rose in the air. Life had stopped. Then there was the sound of falling buildings, the long-drawn crackling crash of stones and masonry. An earthquake! The church near his home, the one to which he had gone with his mother when he was a little boy, was a pile of broken stones; from between them trickled blood. The earthquake was widespread; terrible destruction resulted. In the city of Caracas alone there were ten thousand dead.

Bolívar worked like a madman at the heavy stones which were all that remained of the church, his own tears wetting his bleeding hands. There was no day or night. Then he heard the clamour of the priests. This, they said, was the wrath of God. How was it that this most terrible thing had happened on the anniversary of the first step towards independence in Venezuela? Why was it that on one single column left miraculously standing in an otherwise demolished building, the arms of Spain remained unharmed? Repent, they said, and return to the mother country; you see that God Himself is against this newfangled Republic.

But Bolívar climbed up to the top of a ruined wall.

"Venezuelans," he said, and the fire which was in him made people gather beneath the wall and keep silence, "Venezuelans, you know that our liberty is a sacred thing. Even if nature herself opposes us, we will fight with her also! Liberty shall never die."

But he saw the people kneeling in the streets imploring divine forgiveness for the sin of wishing to be free. He heard the cries of "Viva España! Viva la Inquisición!" Seeing priests exhorting the people to repent of this "crime," Bolívar drew his sword and rallied soldiers to try to stop the havoc which the priests were creating. Congress demanded of the Archbishop that he issue a pastoral letter telling the people that God was not punishing them for their desire for a representative political government. All that resulted, however, was a letter in which the Archbishop compared Caracas to Gomorrah.

But there were earthly perils which were if anything more terrible than the supposed wrath of heaven. Monteverde came on—capturing more towns, murdering and committing every excess—preceded in each place by Spanish agents, who told the story of the earthquake at Caracas and urged the people to return their allegiance to Holy Spain. Whole regiments of patriot troops went over to him, some urged by the threats of eternal damnation and others by the lure of plunder. Various patriot expeditions which had been sent against him had been defeated miserably.

General Miranda was given dictatorial powers in the emergency, for all that now remained of the United States of Venezuela was the city of Caracas wherein many citizens had not yet risen from their knees.

In conferring his powers upon Miranda the Congress had ordered, "Do not consult any but the supreme law of saving the nation."

But they were instructing an old and broken reed, though the general still thought well of himself. He sent Bolívar to the coast to defend the town and guard the fortress at Puerto Cabello. Bolívar did not want to go, though it was really an important place. It seemed to him too far from the centre of events, he knew, better perhaps than any one else, in what grave danger the Republic lay. He no longer had complete trust in Miranda.

It was the rainy season. After so much activity the heavy rains, which made the equatorial lowlands steam, depressed his spirit. He wanted so much to be in the forefront of action, wanted so much to know what was going on! He arranged to have some of his men bring him tidings from time to time. He rebuked himself for his half-conscious distrust of Miranda. Ought not all men serving so high a cause forget personal differences and work in harmony; above all ought not he, an inferior officer, defer in all matters, even in his own thoughts, to his commander in chief? But the news was not good.

Before him stood an Indian runner whom he had sent to Caracas for information. The Indian threw off the wet jaguar skin, saluted, and stood immobile, his wet, bronze skin giving him the look of a statue emerging from a fountain.

"Well, what news?" asked Bolívar.

"Colonel Ustáritz has been sent by General Miranda against Monteverde, the Spaniard, and has been several times defeated. His whole cavalry has deserted and gone over to the Spaniard. General

Miranda has five thousand troops, the Spaniard has three thousand General Miranda does not attack He drills patriot troops every day according to books bought in Europe, they walk thus " He illustrated the goose step

Bolívar knew Miranda's devotion to the Prussian drill manuals

"All day he writes letters in many languages, but none in Spanish In Caracas men say that he tries to get governments over the sea to help him they say why does he not put away his pen and take out his sword while there is yet time?"

Bolívar looked at the Indian Was all this true? he wondered He knew at least that the Indian would not lie These things were being said in Caracas But could it really be true that Miranda would not attack the enemy? He was in an agony of doubt

It was certainly a fact that Miranda despised his Creole officers He had told Soublette his half French aide-de-camp that his only defect was in being half Venezuelan

Bolívar had been at Puerto Cabello for eight weeks now and it had rained every day, so hard that sometimes he could hardly see the fortress in which the Spanish prisoners were confined under the guardianship of Colonel Americh The fortress of San Felipe was built on a rock connected with the main land by a drawbridge It was defended by many fine brass cannon and provisioned with food and ammunition as if for a siege It looked like the Chateau d'If even through the eyes of the Count of Alente

Cristo. Bolívar was staying at the inn in the town. He passed his time in playing chess and swinging endlessly in his hammock.

This afternoon he had been expecting to play chess with Lieutenant Vinoni, who was second in command at the fortress. Vinoni had been with him when the messenger arrived, but he had gone out after the Indian had recited his news—perhaps while he had been reciting it, Bolívar could not remember. Bolívar wanted his game. It was too bad that Vinoni was not a better player, but just now he needed the stimulus of chess to take his thoughts from the dark news he had heard. Then he remembered Vinoni's saying that his superior officer was to be on leave that afternoon. Perhaps Vinoni had had to go back to the fortress?

Idly he got up and looked out into the rain. He saw the flag of Spain flying over the fortress and at the same moment he heard the muffled bark of its cannon! He knew at once what had happened. Vinoni, a member of his own regiment of militia, the Whites of Aragua, had been seduced by the rich and numerous Spanish prisoners in the fortress! Bolívar had only a few hundred men with him in the town, which was commanded by the higher and almost impregnable position of the fortress.

Instantly he was in action. He ranged his small force on the highest hill of the town and returned the fire of the fort with interest. He called the Indian to him and sent him off with a note to Miranda. It read

My General

A Venezuelan officer unworthy of the name, with the prisoners, has taken possession of the fortress of San Felipe and is at this moment firing heavily upon the city. If Your Excellency does not immediately attack the enemy in the rear, this position is lost. Meanwhile I shall hold it as long as possible.

This he most certainly did. After he had fired at the fortress all afternoon he sent a demand for its surrender, the answer was another round of cannon fire, and some taunts which he could not hear. Darkness fell. During the night one hundred and twenty men from his small force deserted and went inland to join the forces of Monteverde. Next day the citizens of the town began to sneak away heedless of Bolívar's impassioned demands to them to stay and help defend their city.

Then Vinoni sent him a demand for surrender. He replied that he would see the town in ashes first.

"Tell your infamous commander that his fate awaits him. I have just had word of a glorious patriot victory. Victorious patriot troops are marching to aid me and the Republic of Venezuela."

To celebrate this imaginary victory he ordered a parade of fifes and drums through the town. But instead of the phantom patriot forces a real company of Spanish loyalists came and encamped in the outskirts of the town. Bolívar would have been caught between two fires if he had not immediately ordered all his remaining men not many over two hundred out of the town to engage this new threat.

Meanwhile he himself helped to fire his single remaining cannon at the fortress. In less than an hour seven men returned from the attack on the Spanish. Seven only. All the others had been killed, wounded, or captured!

Bolívar still refused to surrender, he held out for seven long days and nights. In the end it was the town which capitulated through its civil authorities. It was night. Bolívar and his seven remaining officers made a daring escape, wading in the black water. They swam around under the walls of the fortress and seized a rowboat which was hidden in the reeds. In this they managed to get to a Spanish schooner, whose captain they were able to bribe. Six days later he was in the port of La Guaira; the same day he rode the twenty steep miles to Caracas and in the dark solitude of his own great house he wrote thus to Miranda:

How can I summon courage to write to you after having lost the stronghold confided to my care? I saved my honour, it is a pity that I saved my life also and did not leave it under the debris of the city. Vanity made me believe that my desire to succeed and my ardent zeal for our country's cause would supply the talent for commanding which I lack. I beg you to put me under the command of the most lowly officer.

I performed my duty, my general. If one soldier had remained with me I should still be fighting the enemy, but they abandoned me and there was nothing I could do to hold them.

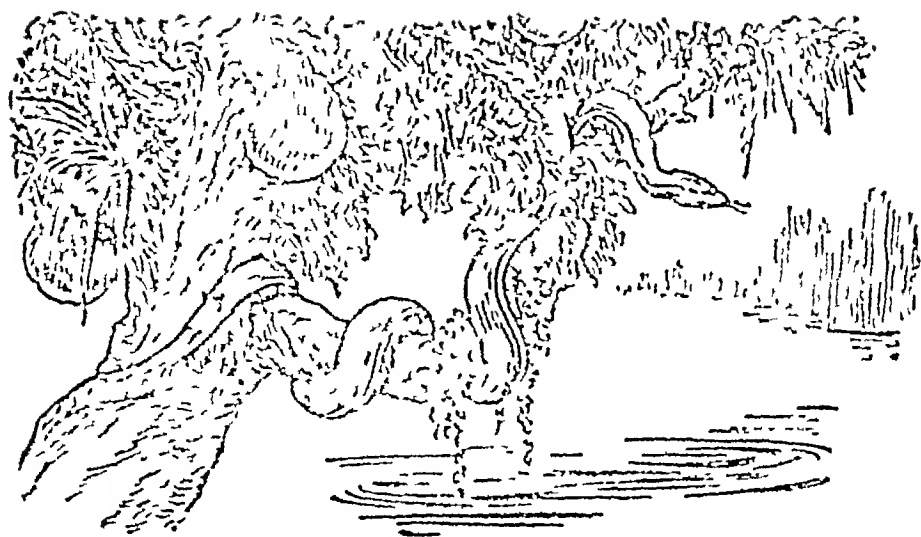
In pity do not oblige me to see your face I
am disgraced

With greatest regard and respect

BOLIVAR

But he had hardly sent off the letter when another great shock shook the city of Caracas. Miranda had surrendered to the enemy! The United States of Venezuela was dead.





VI

ON THE RIVER MAGDALINA

BOLÍVAR LOOKED ABOUT the great house, which he was leaving, possibly forever, looked at the pictures of his ancestors on the walls and saw once again, as if it had been a ghost, the figure of his mother dressed for church in her black mantilla and her sparkling diamonds. He saw at her feet a little boy with curled hair, at first he did not recognise the child. Returning to reality, he collected a few things, the small collection must not be more than his saddlebags would hold. He rode out upon the familiar path over the mountains to the sea; it was crowded now with refugees, loaded with their possessions.

Bolívar did not believe the report that Monteverde had offered Miranda honourable terms of surrender.

or that if the terms had been honourable he would live up to them. He went to live in the house of the civil governor of the port of La Guaira. There, seeing the refugees pour in, all his self-condemnation turned to hate of Miranda. His own delusions about the man he had believed to be great were bitter memories. It was, he felt, this man and this man alone who had betrayed Venezuela. He had never blamed him for ignoring his own cry for help, that he had understood as a military necessity, but this surrender seemed to him treason. Did his forces not greatly outnumber those of the enemy?

He was more sure of this when the order came from the dictator Miranda himself to close the port of La Guaira. The refugees who had expected to sail to the islands off the coast were trapped like rats. Colonel Bolívar was trapped with them. Then there were rumours that Miranda himself planned to leave the country—but not empty-handed. It was said that he had sold his country for a certain sum of gold. Why, if he believed in the merciful terms of surrender, had he not stayed to see them carried out? If, on the other hand, he did not believe in them, why had he not fought on?

Bolívar and a group of patriot officers and civil officials took the law into their own hands. Miranda arrived at the port, it was known that he intended to sail the next morning, that he had lifted his blockade on his own behalf.

Bolívar held council with other Venezuelan officers, they took the law into their own hand. An old general was asleep in his bed when they arrested

him. Without a word he followed them to that damp prison at La Guaira which, washed by the waves of the sea, was half a cave and half a dungeon.

Bolívar never repented of this act. But he said he was sorry that old Miranda had fallen into the hands of the Spanish. For this was what happened. Miranda was sent in chains to the dread prison at Cádiz, where he died after four years of suffering. Monteverde, in complete charge of the country, forced the authorities at La Guaira to hand over the custody of his former enemy Miranda, who had surrendered to him so easily.

Terror reigned. Officers of the Venezuelan army were lined up against walls and shot. Others were sent in chains to a fate far worse than death, over the sea to the merciless prison at Cádiz. Bolívar had hidden in the hut of an Indian. But this was no longer safe. He resolved to take his chance before the military court which the conqueror, Monteverde, had set up.

The Spaniard Casa León was a friend of Bolívar's. The young colonel had seen his comrade the brave priest Cortés Madariaga and many other patriots in chains being shipped with Miranda to Cádiz. He sought a passport through Casa León, who had been Secretary of the Treasury when Venezuela had had a treasury.

An order arrived from Monteverde. Bolívar was to be brought before him.

"In recompense for the service you have rendered the King in arresting Francisco Miranda," said Monteverde, "I shall grant you a passport."

This was too much. Bolívar knew he faced death yet he cried, "If you think that I would render a service to the King of Spain? I arrested Miranda because he was a traitor to his country!"

But Don Francisco Iturbe, also a Spanish friend of Bolívar's, offered his own life as a bond for the young officer. The great grizzled Monteverde looked at Bolívar, so pale and straight and young. He shrugged.

"Give the young fool his passport and get him out of here," he said.

To Monteverde, Bolívar was of no importance. He could not know that in dismissing him he had sacrificed the cause he served—the freedom of Simon Bolívar happened to be the freedom of South America.

Out of the ruins of his great fortune for since the death of his brother Juan Vicente he had become the sole heir to all the extensive Bolívar holdings. Simon managed to take twelve thousand pesos with him to the vessel which was to bear him to exile. It was not a fortune, it was merely all that he had in the world. Everything else like the country for which he had wanted to die had vanished. Then these twelve thousand pesos which were his sole resource were taken from him by the authorities in the port of Curaçao on the ground that there were irregularities in the papers of the vessel which had transported him to this place. He was now a little more than ruined—he was actually penniless.

That his estates should be confiscated by the

Spanish, that was no surprise, but that his baggage should be seized by the English authorities in the port of Cuiçao, which was then a British possession, was a little more than one might expect. He tried to obtain his property by legal means, but the affair dragged on endlessly in spite of the sympathy of some of the English officials on the island.

With him was his kinsman Ribas, he still wore his liberty cap. They wandered together in the orange groves eating the ripe fruit, which was free to all, collecting, as well, cherimoyas—those most delicious of tropical fruits which taste like both strawberries and pineapples—alligator pears, and guavas. At night they went into a cheap little wine-shop, not to drink but to talk, to plan. During the day Bolívar swung in his hammock or played chess. The laundress came with his fine lace-trimmed shirts. There was no money to pay her. This life was intolerable to him.

But, lying like a salamander in the sun, swinging gently in his hammock as all Venezuelans must swing, clear strong thoughts were forming in his mind. At this low point we see the miracle of the mind at work in Bolívar. It was while he was lying alone and penniless, defeated, his property all confiscated, his sisters both in hiding in his ruined country, the story of his life which lay behind him ended in most decisive and disastrous defeat, not only for himself but for the country he had sworn to serve—it was at this moment that he rose as if from the dead. He rose a warrior in golden armour, an undefeatable knight, starting upon a holy crusade.

This change in Simón Bolívar was not visible to any one. He looked merely a thin and nervous young man swinging restlessly in a hammock, with black eyes which looked a long way off and burned with an unearthly fire.

He saw that he had not in the past trusted to *himself* enough. He had believed in the visions of Miranda, had believed in him as a general when his own common sense had informed him of Miranda's gross errors. Colonel Bolívar had been a power, yes, in a thousand ways he had planned and influenced the course of events, but he had been power a long way behind the throne. He saw clearly that he had been right and that others with greater authority had been wrong, that the course of government which he had recommended would in all probability have saved Venezuela as his military tactics would in all probability have defeated Monteverde who had begun on his career of conquest with such a small force. At Curaçao Bolívar learned the greatest lesson that a man can teach himself: he learned to trust his own soul.

In this period of rest and recuperation of living upon the fruits of the earth, he read from his own past, it was the most informing book he could have studied. As he saw in his past bitter mistakes, he saw his future splendid with glorious possibilities.

No one could defeat him at chess. He sat playing beneath a map of South America, that continent coloured in the pale and beautiful cartographic tints, tapering from the fullness and curve of the northern part to the tender final of the Isthmus. He

had won too many games of chess already; he broke away before the final moves which would have led to the checkmate of his opponent, a priest. He stood and looked at the map he loved. At that moment he was no longer merely a Venezuelan; he was a citizen of the whole South American continent.

He knew that, one month after the Captain General Empaán had been deposed in Venezuela, Buenos Aires had formed a republican government; that Santa Fé de Bogotá, in New Granada, had followed suit in July and Chile in September of the same year. Only Peru and Guatemala had remained in Spanish fetters, the rest of South America had proclaimed itself free. Suddenly the map gave him the great idea which subconsciously he had known was coming to him. The ancient walled city of Cartagena, situated at the mouth of the Magdalena River, was still a stronghold of South American patriots. The Spaniards were walled away from the city in New Granada by the peaks of the high Andes; the city lay safe, for the moment at least, in their mighty arms.

In Cartagena they would have some employment for him! They must see that their cause and the cause of ruined Venezuela were one. He would make them see it!

Then, returning to the small details of this world, he looked at the frills on his newly laundered shirts. If he could not pay for his laundry, how could he pay for a passage to Cartagena? The buckle on his uniform was pure gold, he had a very valuable medal and all those costly trinkets which rich young

officers of that day used to possess. He sold these last remnants of former state, and an English friend who felt that he had been scurvily treated in the matter of the confiscation of his money, lent him a modest sum

Unknown, a defeated Venezuelan officer whose very name had never been heard in the city of Cartagena, he arrived there without friends, with no introductions. He shut himself up with pen and paper and wrote out the Manifesto of Cartagena. In this paper he analysed with mastery the reasons for the fall of Venezuela. He showed why her cause was so closely linked with that of New Granada.

He knew that he was making history, he knew that the poverty of his outward seeming was the unreal thing, that the paper he was writing alone was real. He headed the paper, which was to make history, boldly "From the Venezuelan Colonel Simón Bolívar to the People of Cartagena." He showed that, by studying the reasons for the downfall of Venezuela, New Granada might save herself from a similar fate—a fate which surely awaited her if she did not heed the warning of her sister republic.

"We had," he said "philosophers for statesmen, philanthropy for legislation, dialectics for tactics and sophists for soldiers. Our own internal division and not the Spanish army brought us back to slavery.

"I am convinced that until we centralise our American governments the enemy will have every advantage—we shall always be surrounded by the horrors of civil war and conquered by a handful of

bandits who infest our borders. If Caracas had established the simple government which its political and military situation demanded, you would still exist, O Venezuela, you would still enjoy your liberty to-day!

“New Granada’s glory depends upon her assumption of the task of liberating the cradle of *Colombian* independence”

We must pause here to note that this was one of the first times this new word “Colombia,” of Bolívar’s coining, had been used. To-day we call New Granada, wherein was located the city of Cartagena, Colombia, but Bolívar lived to call both Venezuela and our Colombia—his New Granada—by this name, for the countries were to be united. But now, as he wrote, it was but a word upon paper. Though it was the kind of word which does not stay upon paper.

Addressing himself to New Granada, he went on

“Let us hasten to break the chains of those victims who groan in their dungeons, awaiting salvation at your hands! Do not abuse this confidence. Do not turn a deaf ear to the lamentations of your brothers! Let us fly quickly to avenge the dead, to give new life to the dying, freedom to the oppressed, and liberty to all!”

This Manifesto, which Bolívar had printed with the last of his diminishing funds, created a sensation. It won many friends for the young officer, who was now suddenly anything but unknown. Among the friends who were then and ever after most faithful to Bolívar was Camilo Torres, the President of the

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Congress of Tunja, New Granada. He never had a truer friend, and South America has had few more high minded statesmen.

Reading the Manifesto, people on the street said to one another, "This young officer is right. In union there is strength. We ought not to make again the mistakes which Venezuela has made."

Then, when he needed it most and when another laundry bill was still unpaid, he was once more made a colonel, this time in the army of New Granada. But the general in command of the New Granadan forces did not welcome his new colonel. The general had served under Miranda in Venezuela. He did not like Simón Bolívar. He was a Frenchman named Labatut. Bolívar had been presented to him as a valuable man, one of ideas and energy. Labatut had been instructed by the government to make good use of him. Labatut reminded Bolívar of Miranda; indeed the Frenchman had to some extent modelled himself on his former chief. Distrust shone from both men's eyes. The colonel's commission Labatut could not deny Bolívar, but he was free to assign this young upstart, who could, he felt, probably do no more than write high-sounding words to any duty or post he chose. Labatut sent Bolívar to Barranca, a poor little town of mud huts at the banks of that father of waters the Magdalena River. His orders to his new subordinate were to go to Barranca and to stay there. Bolívar was forced to appear pleased and content. Perhaps he was.

Five hundred mules back into the snow. At last the Magdalena has its turn. In turbulent haste it falls

in awful cataracts like a wide silver javelin thrown between the snow-covered peaks, or winds in serpentine coils through emerald-green valleys and impenetrable tropical jungles. It was the great highway of the nation whose capital city, Bogotá, was located on its banks. Barranca, the poor little town situated at the mouth of this great river, was held by a garrison of a few hundred men of New Granada; but the whole vast length of the river was controlled by the Spanish force situated above at Teneriffe, from which vantage point it was able to control the navigation of the river.

Bolívar now looked that part which he intended to play. He was a very smart officer and rode through the town he commanded in white breeches and tall bearskin shako, sitting his superb mount with a grace all his own. He saw a startingly pretty girl leaning in the door of a hut. He smiled at her and touched the visor of his shako.

She curtsied and spoke to him in French. The young officer dismounted, he had not thought to use his French in this remote spot! He knew how to be gallant. The girl was Anita Lanoit, with pale gold hair and soft blue eyes, her parents were French peasants. They sat smiling at their daughter, a little proud that so fine an officer should take notice of her. She fell deeply in love with Bolívar, so deeply that seventeen years later she made a perilous journey that she might be near him. That she arrived too late was her tragedy.

Bolívar wanted to attack the Spanish river fort at Teneriffe; but, as he had foreseen, Labatut forbade

it Bolívar had learned his lesson. He knew that he ought to attack the fort, so he applied over Labatut's head directly to the government of New Granada. While he awaited his commands he told Anita that when the war was over she might ride by his side in triumph through the streets of Cartagena, but while he was talking, his eyes would wander to the road.

"You care much more for your career than you care for me!" she cried.

"Possibly, little one. What do you expect of me?" he asked her.

And then his orders came, they were to proceed to Tenerife according to his own plan. Bolívar knew that in carrying them out he risked his life—not in battle only but at the hands of Labatut, who would probably try to have him court-martialled and shot for insubordination. He would not forgive the young Venezuelan who had gone over his head. Bolívar did not worry over this. He wanted to start to be in action.

The soldiers whom he had commanded at the town of Barranca had been, when Bolívar arrived, an undisciplined lot. It was better so. Bolívar was able to drill them in his own way, also when his orders arrived he had their perfect loyalty. It was his gift—his soldiers always gave him a sort of worship. Now he called upon them for an unheard-of service. Live the vice.

He assembled all the river craft he could procure. There were two kinds of native boats, the *chunas* and the *campes*, which were more in a right way fitted than any other for the purpose. The *chunas* were

still often very large for canoes, being from forty to sixty feet long. The pirogue was a hollowed-out log, the most primitive boat devised by man. The campans were of a wood as enduring as teak; they were usually made of three trees, one for the flat bottom of the craft and two more for the sides. They looked like rude drawings of the boats of the Norsemen. Over these boats were bent saplings which were strong and thick. The framework thus provided was covered with mats, making a sort of cabin within. On top of the framework stood the boatmen with their poles.

Bolívar knew that at Teneriffe the Spaniards had feluccas and some formidable gunboats. The troops—two hundred of them—which he crowded into the native river craft knew it too. They were not afraid; they trusted the young man who had been their commander only a matter of days. They worked to load the campans and pirogues with all the supplies they could carry and all the ordnance of war.

The current of the Magdalena had gathered strength for five hundred miles on its steep downward course from the high Andes; many tributaries contributed to its strength. Against this current Bolívar poled his queer armada upstream. Over wide mirror-like spaces where the deadly force of the current was concealed, into the foaming force of rapids, beside the banks covered with green jungle inhabited with monkeys almost as large as men. As they spent their strength poling their craft against the force of the river, the boatmen sang. Music half

learned in the jungles of Africa half the immemorial song of the New World—a song heard long centuries before the white men sailed to this virgin world—floated over the river

Then the leader spoke. "Cease your singing. From this point we must be as silent as the snake which is coiled on the branch of that tree over there."

He pointed to a green boa constrictor coiled around a tree laden with great calabash gourds, it might have been a scene from an ancient tapestry, a fanciful rendering of the tree under which our first parents met.

At night the boats moved, by day they were hidden under a camouflage of jungle green. They were getting nearer to Teneriffe. Bolívar himself went through the jungle with Indian scouts. He knew the place only from description. Looking through the underbrush he saw that it was a sort of primeval Gibraltar. The fortress at Teneriffe stood on the top of a terraced hill. The lowest terrace was about ten feet from the river. It was guarded on each side by a wild tangle of jungle vegetation and thorns which made a completely impenetrable barrier of natural barbed wire extending for miles. Before the position lay a fleet of stout galleons armed with brass cannon. There were also river craft like his own. It was evident that it would be necessary to take Teneriffe by a water battle. An Indian returning from the outskirts of the town gave him the assurance for which he had been praying: "the presence of his boats was not suspected."

Looking like the albigators which surrounded

them, the vast canoes were poled the last part of the way, then tied together and hidden in the vast tropical rushes which here lined the river. The soldiers disembarked. They silently swam out and manned first the river boats of the enemy and then the flecheras, or gunboats. They silenced the men who guarded them. Now Bolívar's own men stood behind those fine brass cannon. Another force was sent up the terraces in back of the town.

Morning brought battle, desperate and bloody. But victory was assured to the patriots almost from the start; for the Spaniards were within a circle of fire, being bombarded by their own cannon from their own ships.

Bolívar was swinging in the hammock of his defeated enemy, the Spanish commander at Tenerife, who had enjoyed this hammock only yesterday. For a brief moment he was savouring triumph, he knew the vast importance of his victory, he looked below him on the captured ships, he reflected that the whole navigation of the great river was now commanded by the patriot forces. Labatut would not now be able to have him shot for insubordination to his orders. Also, and this was much more important to him, he had successfully accomplished the first step—the all-important first step of his great plan, the plan which he had as yet shared with no one.

Then in the bright light of the doorway a little figure appeared. It was Anita Lanoit. The girl had come all alone through the jungle, up the banks of the river, to be with him. They were together for

only a brief moment Bolívar could not be long detained by love. He was touched and pleased by her devotion, he felt that she had in some way even helped him to be a better soldier. He kissed her good bye very tenderly. Then he called an escort to take her back to her parents.

"Remember, little one wait for me."

Anita took him at his word, she waited for seven teen years.





VII

THE MIGHTY ANDES

THE RIVER MAGDELANA, in the five hundred miles which are the measure of its course from the high Andes northwards to the sea, passes many wonders. Among these is the city of Mompox. Four rivers flow together around its ancient walls. Even before it was discovered by the Conquistadores, the Indians had made it one of the greatest centres of the gold trade in South America. Under Philip II this trade had been marvellously developed. Bolívar had never seen the city, but he knew by hearsay of the wide rectangular streets which intersected it. He could almost hear the sound of the countless hammers of the goldsmiths and silversmiths who worked upon

the precious metals which made the city rich and contented.

Bolívar set his fleet once more against the current, upstream. Followed by alligators almost as long as the campans, they poled their way more than one hundred miles back into the heart of the province of New Granada. Strange illusions began to trouble Simón—he saw snakes in the trees along the jungle-covered banks of the river when his officers saw none, he burned with thirst.

"Colonel," said his orderly, "you have the fever."

But his illness could not interfere. This was the supreme moment of his life. Though he was chilled and burning and his eyes saw strange things, even though he was blinded by the aching of his head, he managed to be the inspiring force of the pettish fleet which he was leading. He forbade the men to shoot at the alligators.

"Our success depends on haste and on secrecy," he told them.

He painted a pretty picture of the riches of Mompox. A city, he said, with a Republican heart inside golden armour.

Bolívar's teeth were chattering with the fever which shook him. Yet he planned an attack and drew his fleet up before Mompox. But no gun was fired. A delegation of joyful citizens appeared instead of a hostile army. The Spanish garrison, knowing that they were outnumbered, had fled. The city of Mompox had fallen to Colonel Bolívar without a battle.

Bolívar organised a triumphal parade. His troops

still dirty from the exertions of poling the barges up the river, marched with their heads high to that stirring martial music which was always characteristic of Bolívar's forces. In the central plaza of the city Bolívar addressed the townspeople

"I myself," he said, "was born at Caracas in Venezuela, but my glory, that was born in Mompox!"

There was wild cheering, the people literally danced with joy. The men came to him eager to volunteer

By the gutters of the straight streets of Mompox grew pink periwinkles; children, in hats made of a single heartshaped leaf of the snake plant, danced, while the hammers of the goldsmiths clanked in chorus. Three hundred men enlisted in the ranks of the young colonel. The city, gay with flowers and rich with gold, gave itself up to rejoicing

But the Spanish garrison had merely retired from the city, stations had been taken up by the enemy at various points in the vicinity. They must be mopped up. Simón, his face flushed with victory and fever, fought six battles in six days, all of them victorious

It was Sunday, only nine Sundays before he had still been eating cherimoyas in Curaçao. His plans then existed only in conversations with Ribas. He sat down a moment and wrote a letter to the wearer of the red liberty cap. In it he told of his triumph, asked Ribas to join him in it as only a little while ago they were sharing a bit of fruit. He gave it to a trusted messenger, with a handful of Mompox gold

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"See to it that this letter reaches the island of Curaçao," he said.

In New Granada at that time there were three free governments. These had but one thing in common a hatred of Spain. They were located at Cartagena, on the coast whence Bolívar had started, at Tunja in the Andes and at Bogotá in an altitude still higher and separated from Tunja by approximately two hundred miles over the roughest mountain terrain in the world. At Tunja was located Bolívar's good friend Camilo Torres. At Bogotá the President was the patriot Naríño, who had escaped from the Spanish prison at Cádiz.

Bolívar was not content with the battles which were won with the sword. Now at the beginning of his career and ever afterwards he fought other battles too, these battles were won or lost not by shot and shell but by words. In this his first triumph he saw to it that he was the soldier of all the three free governments of New Granada. He wrote to each pointing out that he had in a fortnight beaten three thousand Spaniards and liberated an immense amount of territory. He had lost only a few men. He had captured treasure of great value equipment and ammunition. He had opened the Magdalena to navigation. In these letters and others he never forgot the main purpose which was behind them. Union.

The word "Colombia" his word appears in his letters whenever he can safely use it. Directly as fast as he dared he prepared the government of

New Granada to accept his purpose: the freeing of Venezuela. He was miles away from the men he sought to persuade—miles which, as we now compute them, were each as a hundred because of the vast difficulty of travel. Bolívar used his pen with as much skill as he used his sword. Other heroes have been well content to win battles for their country, Simón Bolívar was unique in that he *created* his country at the same time that he won her battles.

We see him now farther along his way at another rich and important town, Ocaña, cured of his fever and awaiting replies to his letters. For he had asked questions in these letters of his. Why not cross the Andes to assist Colonel Castillo, who, with his small garrison of only three hundred, was in mortal danger from the Spaniard Correa? That an army had never crossed these mountains, that they were a trackless white inferno unknown to white men, uninhabited even by Indians, he did not mention. Also he did not mention that over the Andes lay Venezuela. Or that between him and his object lay five thousand Spanish soldiers.

Letters arrived. He had permission from both Cartagena and Bogotá to go to the aid of Colonel Castillo.

But there was also another letter, from a friend in Cartagena. It read in part:

“Your victories have filled the breasts of your friends with pride. They say you are a great soldier here on the street corners of Cartagena, but I would not be your friend if I did not give you warning. I

shall not sign this letter, please destroy it. After all Labatut is Commander in Chief of the Armies of New Granada, in his eyes you are little more than an insubordinate colonel. I even hear it said that he will press for your court-martial. He himself has moved and captured the town of Santa Marta so that the whole of the great Magdalena is in our hands. But I warn you, my friend."

He tore the letter in pieces. Looking up he saw the devoted sentry whose place each night after the march was in front of his tent, the man was looking at him. He handed him the little pieces.

"Here, Poncho, take this bone to another dog!"

Then with that gay energy of his he set about making careful preparations for the epic march ahead. He issued warm clothing to his troops.

His five hundred men had lived all their lives in the steaming heat of the lowlands, they had never experienced cold. Their way led over the very peaks of the vast craggy mountains, for the sides of the paramos were sharply cut by roaring cataracts and the valleys were often divided by torrential streams which it was impossible to ford. For this reason, in traversing the Andes it is seldom possible to go around a mountain—one must go over it. Their route lay through the pathless jungle and over the craggy and cold heights which were inhabited only by condors and jaguars. All food must be driven on the hoof with this little army, all the ordnance and heavy guns carried by mules.

When everything was ready—and everything was

ready very quickly—the army set its face to the east. The great thorny brush tore the men's faces, lacerated their legs; they were tormented by insects grown big and ferocious in this green tropical labyrinth.

One night they had marched after sunset and made camp by the light of the full moon. Bolívar heard a gasping sound. He opened the fly of his tent and saw Poncho, his sentry, rolling on the ground. The man managed to say that he had been bitten by a frightful blue spider. Before morning Poncho was dead. A chill ran through the army of men, most of them brave to desperation. Clearly there were dangers ahead of them the like of which they had never imagined. The country through which they were passing was sinister and strange. At night the campfires were kept brightly burning; but even so, men fancied they saw the phosphorescent glitter of jaguars' eyes. Resolutely, each man taking care of himself, they set their course eastwards.

This was not what Miranda had imagined it to be. Bolívar, riding out alone ahead of his men on a sure-footed white stallion, smiled; but in his eyes there was bitterness. "What am I," he thought, "more than a bandit chief, recruiting my men where and by what means I can, arming them with rifles captured from the enemy, employing ruses, spies, and all sorts of indirect manoeuvres?" Yet in this army of his were the sons of the proudest families in South America. Young aristocrats who had never known hardship now lay down to sleep on the hard cold ground side by side with the roughest peon from the province of Mompox.

First of all they crossed a strange and seemingly limitless plain, in which were strange high walls of earth. Rivers wound about lazily. But one night the camp awoke in the middle of a lake. They thought they were sure to drown. The rivers, suddenly fed by a storm on the mountains above, had risen in the night and inundated the plain for miles. Now they understood the strange walls of earth. The rivers had ploughed them up and then abandoned the course which led through them. These rivers meandered at will and overflowed with dangerous suddenness.

They marched on. Now the smoothness of the plain was broken. They had reached a country full of strange seemingly limitless caves. Stalactites and stalagmites met in the greenish blue recesses. Out of these caverns came unknown and horrible insects. And then they began to climb.

The wind blew ceaselessly, with an eerie sound new to the men who heard it. They had to climb the nearly upright faces of jagged rock. Above them, balanced on ledges, great boulders seemed ready to fall upon them. The mules, some too heavily laden with ordnance, must be driven over the winding paths, sometimes no more than a foot wide. Then these paths made by the caprice of animals, not by the design of men, ended suddenly. They looked below and were made dizzy by the depth; they looked above and shuddered.

They had no more certain route over the Andes than a mariner has on the sea. With this difference: on the ocean a course may be laid and followed.

while over mountains capped with snow and cut by cataracts or goiges too deep to cross men cannot often follow the course they have plotted. A thousand obstacles prevent. Arrived at some craggy eminence, the patriots looked down at sickening depths two thousand feet below. They descended into the valleys, which were so damp and cold that no sun at any season of the year penetrated them. Climbing again, men and beasts slipped from their insecure footholds and went crashing into abysses from which even their cries did not ascend.

Bolívar was everywhere, tugging at some mule that would go no farther, helping to reload some animal whose burden had slipped from its back. Ice storms froze these men from the tropical lowlands. Terrible thunder shook the earth and they were blinded by blue and pink lightning.

The eyes of their leader were almost as bright. He laughed at their difficulties, yet his sympathy was ready. He made jokes about their plight, and at night around the fires he sang gay French songs as the exhausted men huddled under their ponchos. He seemed to them all to be more than human. He did not forget to send his Indians to scout all the route which lay ahead.

Then there came a day when more than nature opposed them. A scout returned with the word that the Spanish commander Ramón Correa was waiting for them with cannon in position. He commanded the pass called Alta de la Aguada, through which they must pass.

Bolívar could not risk a frontal attack on this

Beneath one of the cataracts was a bubbling pool of cold clear water. Bolívar ordered a halt—to wash up.

"It is not my intention," he told his soldiers, "to confront Colonel Castillo with a band of ragged mountaineers. Wash your filthy faces, polish your weapons and you drum major rehearse your corps! We shall enter Pamplona in parade formation."

Laughing happily and jesting coarsely full of the pride of having conquered the Andes and routed Correa the men needed no further urging to carry out these pleasant orders.

But there was to be no parade. Descending by another mountain path the battalion of Colonel Castillo came upon Bolívar's troops when they had hardly begun upon their new career of cleanliness. Bolívar having outscouted his enemies was almost annoyed that his friends should have come upon him unawares.

He mounted his white stallion which had been wounded in the leg and was slightly lame. Castillo also rode out in front of his force.

That night in his tent Bolívar, Castillo and a third man sat sipping wine. He was tall and very dark this third man. This was Major Francisco de Paula Santander second in command to Colonel Castillo. He was more than that—he was the evil genius in Bolívar's career—but this Simon did not know.

As yet Castillo had not dared to refer to the unpleasant fact that Bolívar had cut so far to the right at the

position, nor had there been one word of praise from either man for his feat of crossing the Cordillera of the Andes. Bolívar, not usually sullen, had allowed a silence to lengthen

Castillo spoke "Colonel, I did not like to mention it in the hearing of the men; but the Major and I were shocked, rather, at the conditions of your troops and at the sad plight of your animals. Perhaps you were forced to use both hardly?"

Then Santander offered his word. "We of New Granada always try to keep our troops in readiness for any attack which may arrive——"

"Whereas," cut in Bolívar, "we of Venezuela do not await attack! We have been trained to offer it." He politely filled the glasses "My men and my animals are scarred and dirty, but they are scarred by battles, with the Spanish and also with these mountains."

The Spanish were in the town of San José de Cúcuta, the two officers from New Granada agreed readily to assist Bolívar in an attack upon them. They even allowed him to plan the strategy of the attack. Castillo advanced before the city with only a small force—which fell back before the onslaught of the Spaniards, who came out of the town intent on cutting them to bits. Then the strong forces of Bolívar, bayonets fixed, charged from the woods in which they had been hidden. So precipitate was the Spanish retreat that they left their wounded on the field.

The captured town itself was a storehouse of rich merchandise. The Spanish had intended it to be a

trading centre. Bolívar dispatched as much
 to Cartagena. It was well to show those
 some tangible proof of his victories. As
 expectedly he found a million pesos in
 this he paid his ragged troops.

The remnant of the Spanish force
 La Grita, in Venezuela.

He reported his victory to the N^o
 Congress. But even yet he dared not tell
 he planned to capture Caracas itself,
 asked them for permission to invade
 Venezuelan provinces of Mérida and Tru-
 he set about the business of awaiting a
 always hard for Bolívar to wait. Also t
 a thing as succeeding too well. The
 least, do not inspire envy.

Bolívar had friends among his offic
 bitter enemies. Among his friends
 Granadan Giradot and the Venezuela
 The three were now talking together
 quarters.

"Gentlemen" said Simón "I do not
 or honour for the victories which my
 led gallantly by you have achieved."

Giradot said, "You may not expect
 your due also the cause depends on
 listen to me. An Indian has come to
 that he has been employed to carry
 labour in Cartagena."

Lafayette Urbaneza cut in "My own
 these dispatches. In then Cayallo is

very scathingly upon the condition of your troops. He suggests that you wish to invade Venezuela, involve the governments of New Granada in a foreign war—for your own glory only.”

Bolívar looked at them for a minute. He had not realised that things had gone so far.

Then, seeing they spoke no more than truth, he said, “Other dispatches will be sent to New Granada from me. They will be easy to understand—carry a simple message only, my resignation from the army of New Granada!”

Over the protests of Urdaneta and Giradot he carried out this threat.

In less time than he could have expected he had a reply. His resignation was not accepted, instead, he had been made an honorary citizen of New Granada and promoted to the rank of Brigadier General!

The newly made General issued his first order. He commanded Colonel Castillo and Major Santander to attack the Spaniards at La Grita. Sullenly Castillo prepared to obey. But Santander sent a memorandum to Bolívar's tent. It contained a flat refusal. Bolívar called his orderly.

“My compliments to Major Santander and will he wait upon me at once?”

Santander entered his room. Bolívar was lying in his hammock, looking at a rough map.

“Sit down, Major,” he said, and told his orderly to bring wine.

Santander sat down and politely toasted Bolívar.

Then he said, “Do you not think, sir, that you are leading your troops and mine to disaster?”

"Have I led my troops to disaster or have I won victories?" asked Bolívar

Santander sipped a little wine

"Are you not now, however, tempting the providence which has sent you luck—perhaps because of your youth—up to now? Why should native-born New Granadans wish to mix in the troubles of Venezuela? Why should they involve themselves in a losing war—one, in fact already hopelessly lost?"

Bolívar was standing now. He was very slim and straight

"Santander you have said enough. I understand you perfectly. As your commander I order you to command your men to march with me into Venezuela. Do so or one of two things will happen: you will shoot me or I most certainly will shoot you!"

After they had attacked and driven the Spaniard from his stronghold both Santander and Castillo returned, gave up their commands and proceeded homeward towards Tunja. Bolívar placed their troops under the command of the Venezuelan Colonel Urdaneta.

Bolívar himself was already over the border.

"To-day the Republic of Venezuela is reborn," he said, addressing the people of the first little village on Venezuelan soil and to his troops. "I and 'I'—loyal Republicans— you go to redeem the cradle of Latin American liberty as the Crusaders liberated Jerusalem—the cradle of Christianity."

Bolívar now moved eastwards at the head of his

of the Andes, over those peaks which had been the highway of the Conquistadores three hundred years before. To travel in South America is often to go from peak to peak

Now fame cleared his path before him. The main army of the Spaniards which had separated him from Caracas, reduced to the thousand men whom Castillo and Santander had driven from La Grita, had fallen back all the way to Mérida. This place was now Bolívar's goal.

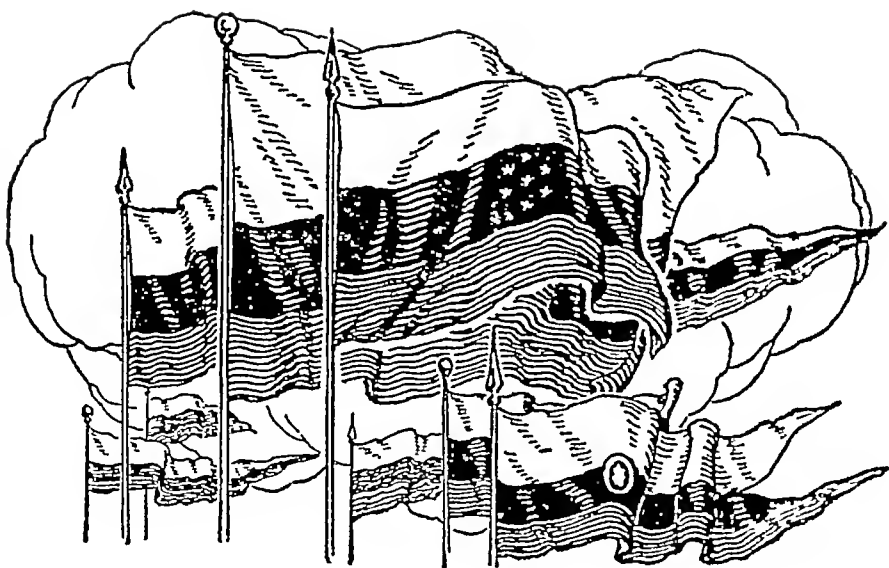
But as he approached, the people of the district, emboldened by the tales of his conquests, rose against the Spaniards, who fled before them and before the name of Simón Bolívar.

Upwards into the high air his triumphal army marched, their ears ringing not with the din of battle but with the high altitude. They found the little city decked with flags and banners. Its medieval Spanish houses with their balconies overlooking the narrow streets were crowded with Señoritas, who threw roses to the soldiers. The Indians performed ceremonial victory dances in the narrow streets.

Bolívar addressed the happy multitude in the central plaza, while the great glistening peaks of the Andes looked upon the man who was not afraid of them. Sixty-seven of the peaks which look upon the plaza of Mérida are more than thirteen thousand feet high, ten of them glisten with perpetual snow. To-day the highest, which raises its head sixteen thousand four hundred feet, is called Monte Bolívar. It is as if the name which was shouted in the streets

of the city of Mérida on May 23 1813 had floated upward, high into the air, to be caught upon the highest peak of all by the snowy giants who watched the scene so far below them.





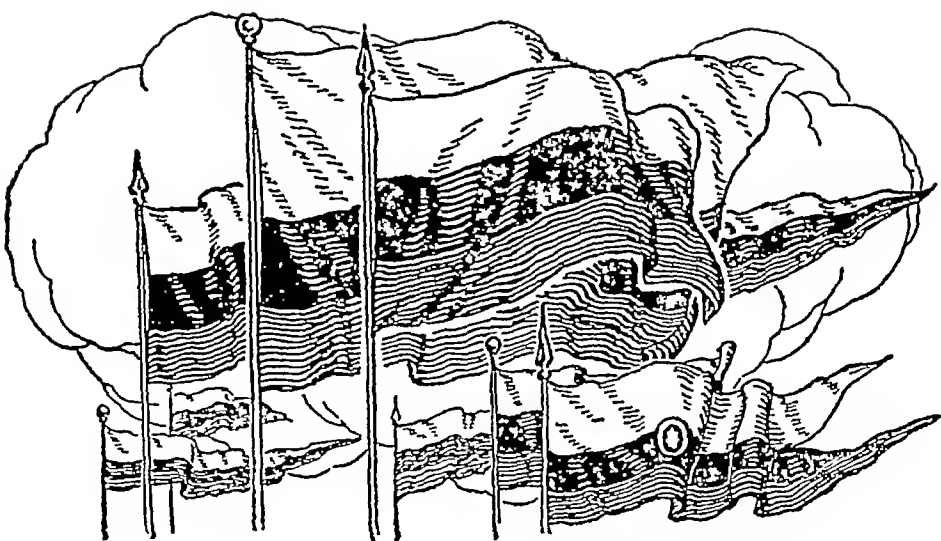
VIII

VICTORY

BOLÍVAR STOOD in a balcony draped with battle flags which had been captured from the Spanish. He addressed the cheering people of Mérida. He looked slight, browned, active, and very sad. First he outlined with solemn prophecy an order of society, a concept of human liberty which was new and strange to the people beneath him. And then he spoke of things which were more nearly related to their common experience. The Spanish ruled Venezuela by torture. They disarmed the people who so greatly outnumbered them, and held them in check by a violence unheard of in the civilised world. The normal imagination could not conceive of the horrors of their tortures.

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awake, something red. Then he jumped up and kissed his kinsman Ribas on both cheeks. He was still wearing his red liberty cap. This was then the answer to the letter he had sent to Ribas from the banks of the Magdalena.

Now the excitement of the day over, late at night Bolívar was alone with Ribas in the damp coolness of the lower floor of an old Spanish house whose thick walls kept out the heat. Only one candle burned and the air was pleasantly perfumed by the smoke which curled up from the long clay pipe that Ribas smoked. His red liberty cap for once removed lay beside him on an ancient carved table.

"Every time I hear you speak to a multitude," Ribas was saying as he knocked the ashes from his pipe, "I am impressed all over again. You know your countrymen. Not only Venezuelans but all the people of this continent. You know what to say to stir them. Even if they have never heard of political liberty you can in a few words make it sound more to be desired than paradise itself. Your words make men wish to die for liberty."

strange—but to use it wisely when it is attained. Sometimes when I am tired as I am to-night the task seems too difficult.”

“No, no, Simón, do not say things like that. Consider what you have already done. You have but recently conquered the Andes themselves. After that all will be easy ”

“No, Ribas, all will not be easy. I have more than mountains against me, I have the very men who ought to be most my friends I endured all risks and hardships in order to support Castillo—to give you an example of what I mean—and when at long last I came up with him he would hardly greet me civilly, he was so consumed with jealousy And now he has gone to vilify my name to the Congress in New Granada ”

“Only say the word and I will myself go and undo the evil he has done,” offered Ribas

And so it was arranged

Next day Ribas stood beside his horse ready to mount.

“One last thing, Ribas,” said Bolívar “Don’t forget that while Castillo is a jealous officer I have a much more dangerous enemy, it is Santander A man may deal with simple enemies, but Major Santander has one of the finest minds on this continent ” Then he lowered his voice. “And with his whole soul he hates me!”

“Cheer up,” said Ribas, springing into his saddle “Things are not so dark as you picture them I will come back and bring soldiers with me as well as good news ”

Simón watched until in the far distance the red liberty cap was only a spot bright against the tropical green of the forest.

After the celebrations at Merula Bolívar began the second phase of his war for liberty. Below them lay the great llanos. No more would they have to battle in the altitudes, the war in prospect was to be fought on the great plains the llanos he knew so well.

Only Correa whom he had already defeated so many times barred his way to Trujillo. He sent his trusted officer Captain D. Elguivar against him with Girardot the New Granadan following close behind. They cleared the way to Trujillo and the town fell.

Bolívar had a real army now complete even to that modern innovation which he was one of the first to adopt—a medical staff. Here also some of his most intrepid generals joined him.

He crossed the last spur of the Andes and arrived in the town of Trujillo but there grave news reached him. In ear the Spanish commander in chief had issued a solemn order. All patriots who surrendered would be put to the sword!

"Every Spaniard who does not help actively to put down this tyranny . . . will be held as an enemy and will be inevitably executed . . .

"On the other hand, an absolute and general indulgence will be granted to those who pass to our army with or without their arms . . . Spaniards who render conspicuous service to the state will be treated as Americans "

He had proclaimed "War to the Death"; his work was now to win this war.

From a strategic point of view Bolívar's position was precarious, he was almost surrounded by three Spanish forces while he stayed in Trujillo. Many men were lost in almost constant skirmishes. At this town also, his official orders from the New Granadan government expired. He here assumed a command which no man gave him.

Ribas, who had returned from his mission to New Granada with troops as he had promised, commanded in one of the most celebrated battles of the long war. He and Urdaneta engaged eight hundred men with their own four hundred. The day's work began at nine in the morning, at sunset they were still fighting. In one last desperate effort Ribas, just as the light failed, led a furious charge. The enemy broke and fled. Ribas captured four hundred and fifty rifles—fifty more than he had men—and one brass cannon.

This was the famous battle of Naquato, Ribas won another at Los Horcones.

Ribas and Urdaneta, though the former was in command, had won the two most important vic-

stories of the campaign. Following their orders from Bolívar, they now joined him at the Oriental looking village of San Carlos. The very churches in San Carlos had minarets. It looked in every respect like a small Moorish town. The streets were not more than ten feet wide, the white houses had small latticed windows. The town was decorated by the rich vegetation of the surrounding country, the banana tree spread its broad leaves, growing against the walls or out of the broken coloured tiles of the patios. In this little place Bolívar sought to quarter his army, now swelled to two thousand five hundred men. But they were not inactive for a single day. It was evident that all the Spanish forces with the exception of that of Monteverde himself were retreating. Bolívar lost not a minute in following them close.

Urdaneta launched a new rear guard attack on the Spaniards whom he caught up with sooner than had been expected. Bolívar, riding at the head of his battalion, heard the firing and spurred forward. He saw before him Urdaneta on the offensive, the Spanish conducting an orderly retreat. He knew that their plan was to join Monteverde, his ancient enemy at Valencia. Though they were harried by the patriot cavalry the Spanish were covering their rear with a curtain of fire. It looked to Simón as if this sort of thing would go on indefinitely. It was getting dark. Before the Spaniards lay a range of craggy mountains. Once they had ambushed themselves there in the darkness, there would be no driving them out.

He wanted to keep them on the plain, to block their advance. He made a plan, an original one. He selected one hundred of his best cavalrymen; then he selected one hundred of his best infantry. He tried to pick the freshest horses, but they were all exhausted with the day's hard fighting.

"Battles," he told the men, "are only won by exhausted armies."

Bolívar commanded one infantryman to mount at the back of each cavalryman. In the smoke of battle the enemy could not discern this manœuvre. They only heard a savage battle cry and saw a small detachment of cavalry charge up along their right flank.

"There will be plenty of time to take care of them when they have ridden farther into our lines," thought the Spanish commander.

The cavalry had rough going, over brush and rocks; the path of their gallant charge was broken by their leaders, who cut a swath through the brush, brambles, and stones and through the fire of the enemy. Then, at the back of the Spanish column, they turned. Horses, white with foam, their nostrils dilated, spread their tired legs. There the two hundred stood and fought.

Against the retreating Spanish column Bolívar expended his full force. With all his might he drove them against his two hundred soldiers. Using their rearing horses for an ambushade, these men held firm and fired and fired and fired. It seemed to the Spanish that behind those plunging horses there was a mighty army. Their ranks broke in utter confusion. Bolívar himself was able to ride completely

around the *mélée*. Every Spanish officer but one was dead—the commander of the force, Isquierado, was wounded and taken prisoner. He died in a few hours.

Bolívar had won a mighty victory. Between him and Caracas there now remained only one obstacle. But this was perhaps the most formidable of all Monteverde.

In Caracas, Monteverde was a little worried by the reports which were just beginning to reach him concerning a young officer whom he barely remembered. A little coxcomb who had dared to be rude to him once—and to whom, as he now saw, he had mistakenly issued a passport. But he had other things to which he gave more attention. News, as we know, travelled by fits and starts in those days. Monteverde knew all about Arismendi, whose wife was in Cádiz, but as yet rather little of Bolívar. The patriot Arismendi had landed on the island of Margarita, where he had been born, and rallied a small army. From British Trinidad, Santiago Mariño, another patriot, had landed on the Venezuelan mainland with only forty-five men, but Monteverde well knew how a small force like this would gather recruits and volunteers as it marched. It turned out to be even worse than he had feared. There were battles at Caminá and Barcelona and others all along the patriots' line of march, in every one of which the Spaniards had the worst of it. Now Mariño could number among his forces such valiant knights of the patriot cause as the Bermúdez brothers, Colonel Piar, and Antonio José Sucre.

Sucré was the White Knight of whom Bolívar afterwards said, "God sent him to me as a compensation for never having given me a son."

Bolívar remembered having met this General Mariño under whose command young Sucré was serving, at that time, however, he had not been a general, but only a young officer who though he was personally unknown to his hero hung on Simón's every word and even aped his manner of dressing. Also, the part Mariño was to play in his life was then still hidden in the future. Now, after Santander, Mariño was Bolívar's most dangerous enemy. He had begun by worshipping Simon Bolívar and he ended by hating him—hating him with jealous envy. Like Bolívar, Mariño was a clever general; like him, he was an attractive and dashing figure. He wanted to go one step further—he wanted to be the Liberator of South America. He never was, but this desire poisoned his career and on many occasions nearly lost the common cause to which he as well as his commander was giving his life. Yet now, to Bolívar, Mariño was only a rumour—a rumour of one more patriot force come to his aid. Bolívar had only the warmest feelings for his new general who had come out of nowhere.

There was other news. Monteverde, his ancient enemy, the general who had contemptuously given him a passport, had taken a stand at Valencia, intending to defend Caracas, but he had a force inferior to Bolívar's. Moreover, there were daily desertions to the patriot cause. The way was all but clear to Caracas!

One day a wild rider came into Bolívar's camp. The old man reminded him of his boyhood days on the llanos, he noted with pleasure all the familiar details of the llanero outfits. And then he kissed the old rider on both cheeks. It was Sancho, who had caught his mare for him when he was twelve years old, Sancho, who had conquered the black bull!

"But now," said Sancho, giving himself a certain importance, "I wish to speak of politics."

It was of Mariño that he wished to speak. Mariño had established himself at Barcelona, assembled a large army and was calling himself "Dictator of the East."

Then Sancho spoke in a whisper. "He intends to march in glory into Caracas!"

The old man looked at the young one, this boy had grown up to be a man of great might, but Sancho noted that he was as thin and slight as he had always been. Now he saw the light of battle in Simón's eyes.

"It could happen, old man, that Mariño would come only in time to cheer another."

He broke camp at once and marched towards Valencia, but Monteverde had heard enough, he had been able to count his own three hundred men. Bolívar had perhaps two thousand five hundred. Monteverde had fled, it only remained for him to sue for peace. The Spaniard selected Francisco Iturbe, Bolívar's old companion in Madrid and the Marquis of Casa León, the two who had persuaded him to give young Colonel Bolívar his passport. Though it was only last August it seemed years ago.

As he rode in military dignity to La Victoria—

the same city in which Miranda had signed his shameful peace terms—to meet the delegation sent to him by Monteverde, Simón reflected that in his first campaign as a general he had marched more than a thousand miles over the great Andes, destroyed five Spanish armies, and—it was not too soon to say it—liberated Venezuela. Perhaps after all he did have some genius for command? He thought of his letter written to Miranda upon the loss of Puerto Cabello. A man must have been defeated to truly savour victory.

Bolívar, forgetting his decree of “War to the Death,” made generous peace terms with his old companions, Casa León and Iturbe. There were to be no arrests, no confiscations of property or reprisals, he pledged himself to try by all possible means to reconcile the divergent elements which seethed in Venezuela. He did not then know that he had set his hand to a task which was probably beyond the compass of any living man.

Not waiting to hear the peace terms, however, six thousand royalists led by the Captain General fled from the city of Caracas. They would not have been able to believe that a victor who had himself suffered so keenly at their hands could have made such terms. If they had been told of them, they would not have believed in such generosity. The emissaries gave immediate approval to the treaty—it now only required the signature of Monteverde, who had shut himself up in the distant fortress of Puerto Cabello.

Bolívar stopped in a wood and took off his sun-

bleached and mended uniform, he parted with the faithful, sure-footed mule which he had ridden since he had had to abandon his lame horse. Resplendent in a gold trimmed uniform and mounted on a white Arabian charger, he emerged from the wood as Napoleon might have emerged from his apartments in the Palais Royale at Paris.

He rode at the head of thin veterans, many of them of the noblest families of New Granada and Venezuela, who had like him who had led them, suffered every hardship and dared every deed. They carried the captured battle flags of the Spanish armies they had defeated. Over the rivulet of the Guaire there was an arch of flowers and beyond it was a delegation of citizens waiting with the thanks and the praise of the city of Caracas for her most illustrious son. What was that which glittered behind them?

Then, somewhat to his embarrassment, Bolívar saw that it was a golden chariot covered with flowers and for horses there were—twelve beautiful girls! Did he think of the tough mule from which he had so recently parted? Or of those Andean passes which were hidden in the mountains to the west?

As the twelve maidens took up the garlanded traces of the chariot the whole valley re-echoed to a salvo which shook the mountains themselves.

The minute arrived, they were entering the city of Caracas. Without warning Bolívar had to face a new crisis, he felt hot tears streaming down his face. He had been feeling too many things too intensely. He made a gracious little speech to cover the embarrassment of a weeping soldier.

"I should gladly have died in battle, my brothers and my sisters, if that would have given you liberty, but I should have wept not to have lived to see this day "

He looked up at the balconies so gay with bougainvillæa, Republican banners, and ancient tapestries, looked up at the bright faces under white mantillas which surmounted the other decorations. He looked down at the streets which were covered with roses, oleanders, camellias, and hibiscus. As they passed the churches not yet rebuilt after last year's earthquake, priests issued out to add august homage to the loyal son of the Church who was passing. Where now the talk of the wrath of God?

Through the narrow streets they proceeded, Bolívar bowing and speaking the gracious words which came easily to his lips. Why pretend even to himself that he was not happy? The mere glimpse of the Spanish battle flags which were carried by the troops marching behind him was enough to make him laugh with joy. Yes, victory and the unbounded love of one's fellow countrymen can be sweet.

A great bouquet of white roses was brought to the chariot. In golden letters on the blue ribbons Bolívar read the words which were sent with the roses. "To the Liberator of Venezuela and of New Granada!" He most gently reined in his maidens. He showed the ribbon to the crowd as he pinned it diagonally across his chest, in the manner of a decoration.

"This title," he told his countrymen, pointing to the word *Liberator*, "is to me the most honourable

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on earth. I ask no other reward than to be known by it—always ”

That night he dined in his own house with his sisters, waited upon by Hipólita and Matea. Through the windows came the sound of the music of those fandangos jotás, and marimbas which recalled his youth. Drums, beating time to these dances, would continue through a night of revelry. Alone now in the bosom of his family he looked much older than his thirty years. He was thin, his forehead was crossed with deep lines of which he was beginning to be conscious. He looked utterly weary.

Hipólita came in and with the maternal authority of an old servant announced, “There came one to see thee.” She was addressing the Liberator of two great countries in the familiar form she had used to a boy whom she loved. “There came one to see thee, but I sent him about his business.”

“And what was that?” asked the general.

“Oh it was an Indian. He came from Puerto Cabello ”

Bolívar called a man-servant.

“Go out and find that Indian, nor return to this house without him!”

“This wine, my brother, my hero,” said his sister María Antonia “was put in a secret place by our father. Perhaps he foresaw a reason for hiding it. Drink a glass now and forget thy Indian.”

But the door opened and the Indian was saluting.

“It is of Monteverde that I speak, Excellency. He has sworn a filthy oath that he will never deal with rebels. He will not sign the treaty of peace.”



I X

THE WOLVES MAKE WAR

"THE DAY is for fighting, the night for dancing!"

Bolívar was talking to his nephew, María Antonia's son. He was sitting on the lap of the general, who had returned to the table and was taking a sip of wine from the bottle which was covered with cobwebs.

Then he said to his sisters, "Let us dress for the grand ball!"

María Antonia was stouter than she had been when her brother last saw her, but this rather accentuated her look of a goddess of liberty with dark sculptured hair and straight Roman nose. Juana's hair had lost none of its gold, though she was now chiefly pre-occupied with her children.

"Aren't you too tired to go to a ball to-night?"

Bolívar sat biting the end of the quill pen which he held, looking down and speaking with infinite sadness he said, "Perhaps not, but it forecasts a long and bitter war"

Then, dismissing Colonel Ustáritz he returned to his problems, there had been a great victory and yet the soldiers whom he had led over the Andes went ragged in the streets of Caracas, wearing the same garments, now faded and torn, in which they had left their homes in New Granada. Moreover, they had not been paid since they crossed into Venezuela.

Bolívar levied a tax of one hundred and twenty thousand pesos on the Spanish merchants in Venezuela, or the part of it under his jurisdiction. He sold some of his own lands—thus the troops were paid. Then before the end of August another of his dreams came true. His army had uniforms! Uniforms designed by Simón Bolívar.

In ten days and ten nights, for Simón hardly slept at all these days, he recreated his country. His chief diversion was to take supper as many nights as he could manage it at the house of Señorita Josefina Madrid, who lived with her mother and sister Señorita Pépa, as Bolívar's troops learned to call her, was a beauty cut out on the Spanish pattern. Republican or not, her clothes were sent to her from Madrid. She wore high combs—very high combs—mantillas and cerise flowers in her black glittering hair. About her lingered the perfume of Spanish carnations. She flirted a fan. She had a famous collection of fans. She also had a talent for gaiety. With her Simón could forget, or almost forget that

in his slender person he carried the weight not of empire but of the liberation of a continent. To her, quite naturally, he was everything that was most romantic.

Her mother always sat with them, but she was fat and phlegmatic; she would first nod and then peacefully sleep.

Simón was always late even for the late Spanish dinner. It was now ten-thirty, Pépa looked at an old-fashioned jewelled watch which ticked very loudly. Then, looking through the iron-baired windows, she saw him. But he was frowning.

The servant removed with reverence the dark green cape with the high gold-embroidered collar that Simón wore, while Pépa marvelled once more at the sleek, well-arranged red-black hair. How could such a very busy man take such good care of his personal appearance? Simón was pulling off his gloves and handing them to the servant.

"To-morrow we march," he said to Pépa.

"Oh, no! How could you? You have been in Caracas just ten days! I have counted each one, you know! How can you possibly leave? What will become of the government without you? Every one says you have accomplished miracles of organisation. But without you how can the government carry on?"

Bolívar did not waste words, even with ladies, so the Señorita changed her tune.

"Come and have dinner and we will talk, when you are rested."

Bolívar liked to talk to Pépa. It did not matter what he said, he could think out loud, for Pépa did

not tell. She left all the thinking to him, she did not interrupt the flow of his thoughts. She helped him to trust himself, and ever since that first bitter defeat at Puerto Cabello he had known that the freedom of his people would depend on his self confidence. It was a sacred duty laid upon him he must never lose faith in himself nor underestimate the wiles and the strength of the enemy.

"It is to Puerto Cabello, strangely enough, that I must return. I am almost superstitious about it. Monteverde is there hurling insults at us and, worse, I have information that he is daily gathering recruits. Like a fox he has chosen his position on the sea. He can receive any supplies he can send for and even receive reinforcements from the islands off the coast, or from Spain itself for that matter. Without ships I cannot hope to take the fortress. Mariño has some old gunboats, with these bombarding the fortress from the sea no power on earth could keep it from our brave troops. But will Mariño co-operate with us? I am not so sure. I have done all I could to woo him. I have acknowledged his supreme authority in the East, I have suggested that he be made chief executive, but the men who have returned from his camp seem to think that he is bitterly jealous."

"But you have done everything. He has done *nothing*."

"No, he hasn't done nothing, not in the past, but I'm afraid that now that is exactly what he plans to do."

She filled up his wine glass though he had barely sipped it.

Simón went on "Without Puerto Cabello in our hands we shall never be able to maintain the government. Nor is that all. I hear that trouble is brewing in Coro, that pest spot which always was and always will be—until we conquer it finally—full of Spanish sympathisers. There is trouble all around us. But I do not fear the outcome for a minute if the troops from New Granada will remain loyal and if the people are united behind us."

Next morning, with Colonel Urdaneta and the young Granadan Giradot, Bolívar rode at the head of his troops towards Puerto Cabello. But halfway there they ran into an Indian war. The Spanish priests had raised the Indians to the cause of Spain. Bolívar was forced to stop until he had quelled this dangerous uprising. In Venezuela it was always possible for any adventurer to recruit among the ignorant Indians or among the lowest classes of the population, which were at that time in a savage state. All that was needed to gain recruits was to promise them plunder. To this the llaneros themselves were no exception, as Bolívar was soon to learn.

At Puerto Cabello, that fortress whose picture in streaming rain would be forever engraved on his mind, he laid siege to Monteverde. There were skirmishes in the streets of the city, but, as he had foreseen, it was almost impossible without naval help to dislodge his ancient enemy.

Strangely he found himself quartered in the very same house, a building part inn, part town hall, from whose window he had seen the Spanish flag unfurled over the fortress at Puerto Cabello.

"No good can ever come to me in this place," he said to an officer, and then immediately regretted his words as he saw the man's quick look of fear.

"Excellency now there is a mist, but earlier there were reports that ships had been seen off the coast making for this harbour, and it was said that those ships were Spanish!"

"Go at once and see if there is any more news from those who are stationed on the hilltop," commanded Bolívar.

Soon there was news and it was as bad as he had feared. The ships were indeed Spanish, they hailed from Puerto Rico and they bore no less than twelve hundred troops, who came to reinforce Monteverde! Almost at the same time, as if to complete the disaster, a letter was brought to the Commander in Chief. It was from Mariño and in it he once more refused Bolívar the help of those gunboats which alone might have saved the situation.

Giradot, the handsome young officer from New Granada whom Bolívar trusted, was with him as he read. Seeing Bolívar's face, he had no need to ask the contents of the letter. But then suddenly Bolívar rose and stood very slight and straight, looking straight in front of him with a deep light in his beautiful eyes.

"Giradot it is at times like these that the mettle of a soldier is tested. It is when heaven itself seems to oppose that true courage is called for. You see as a soldier that we seem faced with insuperable odds. These reinforcements when even without them we have been unable to reduce the fortress! This last

refusal of Marañón's! And yet I swear to you that we shall win this fight. We shall win it though your life or mine may be the price of victory!"

Next day brought a strange fulfilment of Bolívar's brave words. Gnadot, with sabre in air, led a furious charge—a charge crowned with victory. The outer works of the fortress fell to the patriots, and then just as Bolívar saw Gnadot plant the flag of the Republic of Venezuela on the heights which he had captured so gallantly, he saw him fall. He had been struck in the forehead by an enemy musket ball.

In the death of Gnadot, Bolívar had lost a valued friend and companion-at-arms, the New Granadan troops had lost their hero. Bolívar immediately organized a "Battalion Gnadot." He put the fighting Captain D'Elhuyar, who had been the childhood friend of the dead man, in command.

He said to the troops, "Go now and avenge your brother!"

Furiously they attacked the main column of Monteverde's army. They drove them back into the fortress itself, and Monteverde was so seriously wounded that he was never again able to fight against Simón Bolívar and disappears from this history.

If he had not achieved a complete victory, Bolívar had at least brought about a stalemate. Morales, hopelessly wounded, had been shut up within the fortress and his men so badly beaten that they were not likely to make serious trouble for a long time. He must return to Caracas before the hastily fabri-

cated government fell to pieces. Giradot, who had given his life for this defeat of a vastly superior enemy was still with him. Bolívar turned his march back to Caracas into a vast funeral procession. At each village, homage was paid to the glory of the dead man. Entering the capital city, Bolívar's first action was to arrange for a High Requiem Mass to be sung in the Cathedral.

The day after Giradot's bones had been laid to rest with such pomp in the Cathedral, the city council of Caracas named Bolívar Captain General of the Armies of the Republic and bestowed upon him officially the title of Liberator of Venezuela.

Simón was deeply and sincerely moved by this title, when he had said to the donor of the bouquet of roses on the occasion of his triumphal entry into Caracas that he desired no other reward he was saying no more than his life proved to be true. He did refuse much more high-sounding titles, and even crowns.

Accepting it officially in Caracas he said, "I regard it (the title of Liberator) as more glorious and satisfying than the sceptres of all the empires on earth!"

Then he did a very generous thing—a thing which few men who have acted upon the stage of history would have thought of doing. He created an "Order of Liberators." Though we know how much of the creating of "Colombia" depended upon him and upon him alone, he was himself eager to share his greatest honour. It was a generous and original act. He conferred the title Liberator upon Ribas, Urda

neta, Ricuarte, D'Elhuyar, and Campo Elías. He also sent it to Mariño and to some of his officers. He sent it with one of those letters of his which prove that he was a very courtly gentleman.

He concluded his letter by saying: "I wear it myself, even though, in the noble undertaking which our arms have brought to a glorious end, I am the last to merit it."

The secretary to whom Bolívar had dictated this letter brought it for signature. As Bolívar took up his pen and bent over the paper, the young man permitted himself a brief smile. The words "brought to a glorious end" had caught his eye. Did the Commander in Chief really believe in this "glorious end" himself? he wondered.

"You may tell Colonel Soublette that I am ready to receive my staff."

As the secretary bowed low in leaving the room, he stole a glance at General Bolívar. Had he not lost weight? He was always so slight that his lithe and wiry strength was a source of surprise to strangers. Surely just now he looked as if a little wind would blow him away. "But then," thought the secretary to himself, "he never sleeps."

"Gentlemen," said Simón when his staff was seated in a circle around him, "I want all the information you can give me. I know that our situation is grave."

The generals spoke gravely and in turn. Each had knowledge of some sector and it seemed that in each lurked some special peril. In Coro, a town which had always been stubbornly loyalist, the men from Puerto Rico, those very reinforcements which Bolí-

var had so recently defeated at Puerto Cabello, had gathered. At this moment they were advancing on Valencia, the portal to Caracas itself. In another direction a force of two thousand five hundred men was marching towards the capital.

One of the officers was sitting very erect. It was evident that he had something important to say. He was tall and very dark, with long waving mustachios. This was Captain Campo Elías, a patriot in whose veins the purest blue blood of Castile flowed. He was almost a fanatic, for his hatred of Spain was such that he had sworn first to see the Spaniards driven from the soil of the New World and then to kill himself and his family!

"Captain Campo Elías," said Bolívar, giving him the opportunity to speak for which he had evidently been waiting.

Rising to his feet, Campo Elías looked like a reincarnation of the Cid himself.

"Excellency, it is of the worst of Spaniards that I wish to speak. A man who has every evil trait of our race combined. He is a low pirate who was sent to these shores as a prisoner, a man so vile that they could not tolerate him even in Spain. And yet now he has become a mighty chieftain, mighty and cruel beyond belief. For using no other lure than the *promise of plunder*, *this man has rallied the great llanos of Venezuela behind him*. He sweeps all before him and as he advances like a thundercloud his hordes increase, for in the uncivilised llanos the lure of rapine and plunder gain many recruits!"

"Go on, Captain, we are listening," said Bolívar,

breaking the awed silence which had fallen upon these seasoned officers

"A henchman of this chieftain, coming upon a church full of people, entered and murdered them all at their prayers. In another town, cracking a great whip, he forced the women to dance while their men were led out and put to the lance like bulls. Excellency, I speak of José Tomás Boves."

"He leads perhaps the most savage band of horsemen who ever roamed the earth," put in Soublette

But Bolívar was standing and silence fell. He looked down a moment while this silence deepened and then, looking into the distance over the heads of his officers, he spoke

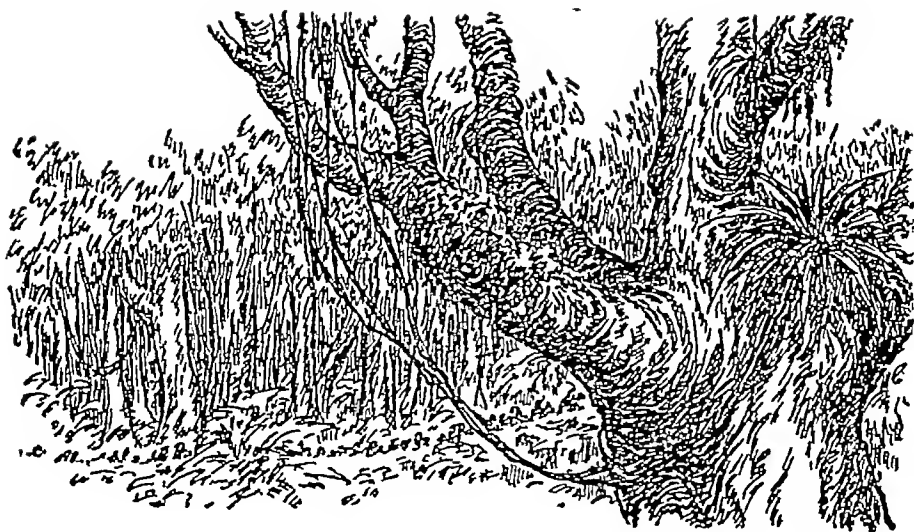
"Gentlemen, I have heard of Boves. I know that Captain Campo Elías has spared us the details of his cruelties, which he well knows. He feels that these could not be properly recited in the presence of civilised men. I know his hatred of the Spanish and I respect his restraint. But, gentlemen, I have seen Boves. Once outside of Puerto Cabello I was close to him in battle. He is a square man with red hair and evil, bloodshot blue eyes. But, my brothers-in-arms, I just want to point out one thing to you. He is a man even as we are. He has only two hands, and you and I, who have fought side by side, who have survived earthquakes and crossed the mighty Andes, are not afraid of any man!"

Before he had finished speaking there was a shout; all the men were on their feet now. In every heart there was but one desire, to meet Boves face to face in battle

"You know," said Soublette as he walked out of the room with Campo Elías, "there is something of the holy man in Bolívar. I feel"—he hesitated before the word as if he feared that it was not quite the word for a man to use—"I feel *inspired*."

"Yes, yes. You have said the very word. I feel like a knight starting out on a holy crusade!"





X

THE JUNGLE AND FALSE FRIENDS •

WITH EVERY RESOURCE within himself and with all the force he could summon from the new-made democracy, Bolívar fought for the life of the Second Republic of Venezuela. The Liberator's best information was that he was surrounded at Caracas by four armies, whose total strength was not less than fifteen thousand men. Using the tactics of wolves who surround the stag at bay, the Spaniards attacked on all sides as nearly simultaneously as possible. But the brave stag had savage horns.

"Unless our forces unite, the Second Republic of Venezuela is most surely doomed." So Bolívar wrote to Mariño. It was his last appeal and it did not go unanswered. At last, and when it was too late,

Mariño responded that he would join forces with the Commander in Chief. They were fighting time itself now, for Boves knew of the move and was making forced marches to prevent the union of Bolívar and the Commander of the East.

A letter came from La Puerta, where Campo Elías had been defeated by Boves. The capital itself was threatened!

Bolívar could not return, he must meet with Mariño. He sent a dispatch to Ribas in the city.

"Save Caracas at any cost!"

Ribas was perhaps the greatest of all those great soldiers who were developed by the War of Independence in South America. His valour was innate and his passion for liberty congenital. When he received the Liberator's message he shifted the liberty cap on his head. He had no troops with which the city might be defended. There were at best one or two depleted regiments left to guard Caracas, among these men were many wounded, on sick leave. The best troops were with Bolívar. Nor was he facing an ordinary foe. Ribas knew the full extent of the terror which the llanero horsemen of Boves threatened. He must save Caracas and he had almost no troops. How?

Ribas went to the colleges and to the military schools of Caracas. He told the students that their country needed their services, he warned that they might be called upon to give their lives also. But he was answered by cheer upon cheer. He drilled his young battalion. They were supplied with martial music by the school bands. Never had the airs been

better played, or battle songs sung with more stirring effect. To the shrilling of fifes and roll of drums the battalion of schoolboys marched out of Caracas. The citizens wept and cheered at the same time. Mothers threw roses to their sons, then disappeared from balconies to weep behind closed doors.

It was at La Victoria that Ribas met the enemy. There he led charge upon charge. Three war horses were killed under Ribas that day. But he and the boys whom he commanded held the llanero lancers at bay. At last, in the evening, the boys were being driven back—back over the bodies of their school-mates. Then, as in a storybook, a little cloud was seen to appear over the horizon. Help at the critical moment. It was Campo Elías with a company of horsemen come to reinforce them! The day was saved. One of the boys was dying of his wounds on the battlefield. His best friend held him in his arms.

"Please tell Ribas," said the boy, "that I did not take a single backward step!"

Meanwhile Bolívar had won a shining victory at Carabobo, that famous battlefield. He led the charges himself, changing his sabre from right hand to left, using the fencing technique he had learned in Paris. Then he found himself fighting on his own hacienda of San Mateo, that place where his happy youth had been spent. The fair fields which surrounded it were obliterated by rank growth now, the orange trees reached up above giant weeds.

In the old sugar mill, an ancient Spanish structure, was stored the patriot powder, the patriot shells. There was a minute of peace before they met the

enemy at this spot. Bolívar let his eyes dwell on the familiar outlines of the rolling fields and of the mountains behind them. The colours were as he had always remembered them, extra brilliant. He looked down, veiling those speaking eyes of his from the world. It was a habit he had, this way of looking down. That way he could think, no matter how many men surrounded him, even in the height of battle. Now he thought of Rodríguez. Under that sugar mill when he was twelve years old, together they had planned the liberty of Venezuela. But they had not counted the cost.

A scout rode up, the enemy was coming over the hills. The men ran to their prearranged stations. Boves himself led the charge against San Mateo. It was evident that the enemy had knowledge of the fact that ammunition was stored in the old sugar mill. It was the principal object of their attack. Antonio Riquarte, one of the aristocratic New Granadan youths who had crossed the Andes with Bolívar, led the charges against the llaneros. He drove them back again and again. Then, looking about him he saw that a party of llanero horsemen was coming over the hill, at the back of the sugar mill! He left his lieutenant to lead the next charge and command all the troops to leave the mill and to take with them enough ammunition to last two hours. His commands were obeyed.

"Are you not coming sir?" asked a lieutenant seeing Riquarte still in the mill and seeing also from one of its small medieval windows the waves of llaneros pouring down the hill behind.

"Not at this minute Go to you men, Lieutenant," commanded Ricuarte

Below him in the plain he saw the llaneros waver before the charges of the patriots, above him he saw the llaneros of Boves charge down the hill to the mill which contained him, but these men were unopposed. They came nearer; they surrounded the mill He was surrounded by kegs of gunpowder. Still the battle in the fields below continued His men, as he had intended, thought that it had been his strategy to abandon the mill to the enemy. He saw, too, with a soldier's eyes what was going on in the enemy ranks. They were preparing to encircle the mill, to charge it from all sides at once.

Then the men fighting on the plains below were shaken by an earth-shaking explosion The mill, at the moment when it was overwhelmed by the enemy, had blown up! All Boves' men who charged the mill had been destroyed The tide of battle turned; it was a great patriot victory The young lieutenant sought for Ricuarte, and then with that mysterious knowledge which sometimes comes to us as we think back on things, he knew! He knew that Ricuarte had planned this thing

Bolívar, always generous in bestowing praise on his brave comrades, knew how to honour the memory of the fearless soldier The name of Antonio Ricuarte is written to this day in the hearts of the peoples of South America

Ribas won another victory over Rosete, the Spaniard who had murdered the people in church. Battle followed upon battle Bolívar was every-

enemy at this spot. Bolívar let his eyes dwell on the familiar outlines of the rolling fields and of the mountains behind them. The colours were as he had always remembered them, extra-brilliant. He looked down, veiling those speaking eyes of his from the world. It was a habit he had, this way of looking down. That way he could think, no matter how many men surrounded him, even in the height of battle. Now he thought of Rodríguez. Under that sugar mill, when he was twelve years old, together they had planned the liberty of Venezuela. But they had not counted the cost.

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"Are you not coming, sir?" asked a lieutenant, seeing Ricaurte still in the mill and seeing also from one of its small medieval windows the waves of llaneros pouring down the hill behind.

"Not at this minute. Go to your men, Lieutenant," commanded Ricuarte

Below him in the plain he saw the llaneros waver before the charges of the patriots; above him he saw the llaneros of Boves charge down the hill to the mill which contained him, but these men were opposed. They came nearer; they surrounded the mill. He was surrounded by kegs of gunpowder. Still the battle in the fields below continued. His men, as he had intended, thought that it had been his strategy to abandon the mill to the enemy. He saw, too, with a soldier's eyes what was going on in the enemy ranks. They were preparing to encircle the mill, to charge it from all sides at once.

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Bolívar, always generous in bestowing praise on his brave comrades, knew how to honour the memory of the fearless soldier. The name of Antonio Ricuarte is written to this day in the hearts of the peoples of South America.

Ribas won another victory over Rosete, the Spaniard who had murdered the people in church. Battle followed upon battle. Bolívar was every-

where at once, though he was beginning to feel the great physical strain. He was constantly in the saddle. He dared not admit even to himself that the Republic was threatened. Whenever he met with his officers he was gay and confident, even if, in his secret heart he was doubtful of the outcome, they must never suspect it. It was always thus with him. He had again and again to win in the face of defeat. he had learned that confidence is precious. But the strain was almost unbearable at times. It is hard always to be confident.

As a general he saw too, that these recent victories won at such cost did not count a great deal, more men than they could ever defeat came against the patriots from the limitless llanos. Captain D Elhuyar was outnumbered at Puerto Cabello. Bolívar went to his aid leaving Mariño to guard San Carlos. But Mariño allowed himself to be surprised and was completely defeated by Boves.

On receiving this news Bolívar returned to Caracas to hear further that Boves was actually at that moment engaged in battle with Mariño at La Puerta whence he had retreated. Simón gathered all the men he could and set out for this place. But he arrived too late to turn the tide. Yet not too late to see the death of many of his best officers, among whom was Campo Elías. He had not lived to kill himself and his family for the crime of being Spanish! Some of them committed suicide rather than be captured and submit to Spanish tortures. One thousand patriots lay dead upon the field. It was defeat—decisive defeat.

Nevertheless Bolívar and Ribas went to Valencia, arranged for the defence of the city, then Bolívar rode back to Caracas. Did he think of the chariot drawn by maidens? The earthquake had taken the lives of ten thousand souls and war had taken the lives of another ten thousand. All about stretched stark ruin—ruin beyond anything which had existed in the time of the Spanish Captains General. But he roused himself. He was not yet defeated! Then, in his own house in Caracas once more, in a city where there were almost no soldiers, Bolívar was planning to send aid—such as he could muster—to the besieged city of Valencia, which was now the only barrier between Boves and Caracas. Before his window he saw a man jump off a spent horse. He saw that the horse had dropped dead. The soldier entered; he had a small head wound which he had not had time to bandage, so that his terrible story was made more gruesome by the blood which dripped unheeded on the tiled floor.

“Valencia held out, Excellency,” he said, “for ten days. There was neither ammunition nor food. Then Boves offered very honourable terms and my commander accepted them; since no reinforcements had come to him he could not do otherwise. But while Boves and my commander were together at Mass, the killing began. The governor of the city was shot. Then, as the night wore on, the scenes were like the scenes from hell.”

“Tell me no more. Go, my man, and bind up your head and say a prayer of thankfulness for your own escape.”

The Liberator had turned greenish white like a dead man

"Send for the Archbishop," he said to his aide-de-camp

Before long, looking out of the window, he saw the old man getting out of his litter in the streaming rain

"Sit down, Reverend Father," said Bolívar "I need your august council This Second Republic of Venezuela has received a death wound But I am determined, as I know you are, to save human liberty for this our city of Caracas. The Spaniards may enter the city, but they shall not enslave the people within!"

The Archbishop's white hand played with the magnificent jewelled crucifix which hung around his neck He looked at Bolívar doubtfully He had seen this city of Caracas change hands many times

"Perhaps my son, I do not understand quite what you mean?"

"I mean," said Bolívar, speaking with that irresistible authority of his, "I mean to move the city of Caracas! I shall lead a march to the southeast, to Barcelona. The Spaniards shall have the empty shell of Caracas, the cause of Liberty shall have its body and its soul!"

"But my son, consider! It is the season of the rains! Would you lead women and children, delicately reared aristocrats, out into the terrors of the jungle? They will perish. Better perhaps to let them take their chance with the Spanish themselves."

The old man was almost pleading with this head-strong young man.

"Father," said Bolívar, "the way to salvation is hard, you know that. And while I live I will not surrender, nor will the people of this my native city stay here to be slaves. But, Reverend Father, we must have money, for there is none in our treasury. I have sent for you to implore you to give me some of the riches of the church to help to defray the expenses of this holy crusade."

Again the Archbishop clutched at his crucifix, but in the end he promised to send that very day strong-boxes filled with silver and gold church plate.

As soon as the word got around that Bolívar would lead them, the citizens of Caracas prepared to go with him. We may well marvel at this devotion. It appeared that it was not merely the plan of the Commander in Chief, but the spontaneous will of the population to follow him—wherever he led.

The inmates of those dark Spanish houses, whose knowledge of nature had been confined to the plants and the parrots in their patios, now walked out in the equatorial jungle in the season of the rains. Their flesh was torn by brambles, long and sharp like daggers, there were great spiders and clouds of whining mosquitoes backed by other unknown insects. They caught fever and many died of it; others went insane. Many sank into the black and spongy earth never to rise. In the rainy sky flocks of vultures followed their march.

Bolívar rode ahead, folded in his dark military cape. He shut his eyes, it was becoming a habit; he could not look at the misery which followed him.

And yet in the face of the green desolation in which he rode, broken in body, racked with fever as he had been in those old days upon the Magdalena, he said aloud, "There shall be victory! The art of conquering is learned through defeat."

He shut himself away from disaster in order that, within him, the spirit of victory might live.

Her hair, once curled with such elaborate care, now streaming over her face in black points, the Señorita Pépa, crouched on her tired mule, followed close behind Simón.

"How is it with thee?" she asked, riding up beside him after a struggle with her spent mule.

"With me? Why do you not think of yourself? Sometimes Pépa, it seems to me that I have been mad. Perhaps I am leading all these who trust me so pitifully to their death."

"Do not let thoughts like that cross your mind, Simón," she said, speaking low and in fear lest someone overheard them. "They must believe that they are going to liberty—to glory. They must believe that they have defied the Spanish yoke. Only this faith keeps them alive."

"And that," replied Simón with his old confidence, "is no more than the truth but this is worse than I had foreseen."

Each day was harder than the day before, and there were twenty days and twenty nights! Before Bolívar's eyes a woman went suddenly mad. She flung her baby into a ravine and then jumped after him herself. From the first the refugees had been shadowed by the armies of Boyes, only the jungle

which tormented them saved them from that other cruelty

When the city of Barcelona was reached by the pitiful stragglers who had survived that awful march, the poor shelter it afforded gave them little ease, but Bolívar gave himself no rest. He wrote at once to England for help

But he did not spend his time in writing, he was more occupied in rallying his miserable army. The troops were loyal. Though they were so few, they were as ready to die as they had always been. But all the troops were not his men, many more were attached to Mariño and to Mariño's officers. Bolívar came among them now not as the conquering hero, the Liberator of Venezuela, but as a defeated general. And yet when the men saw him they felt that mystery of his personality which disaster did not dim. They felt that they were in the presence of a commander, and it was a joy to obey. The thing which he saw they saw also—glory.

Morales, the henchman of Boves, had been pursuing the refugees. He had now eight thousand men advancing on Aragua, from which place of vantage he could destroy the patriot army—or what remained of it—which was guarding the refugees in Barcelona—or what remained of them.

With speed, patience, skill, and tact, Bolívar recruited. From Mariño's army he gathered some three thousand five hundred men. With them he marched on Aragua. His men were exhausted and hungry, they engaged with the llanero troops of Boves, whom Morales commanded. These wild

horsemen were strong from the raw salt beef which was their habitual diet. The patriots were outnumbered almost three to one. Nevertheless the patriots fought almost to the last man. It was their last stand, and final defeat.

With only a handful of men and one or two officers, Bolívar fell back on Barcelona. He led his refugees to Caminá, just in time to save their lives. For Morales, in the fashion of his chief, murdered more than three thousand civilians who had taken refuge in the church in Barcelona.

It was still raining in the little seaport of Caminá. Bolívar sitting in a boat with three ladies, was headed for a schooner which was to take the ladies to the Antilles, to one of those British islands where they might find refuge. Pépa was weeping. Juana sat with her head in her hands. Only María Antonia looked steadfastly ahead.

"Do not despair," she said to Bolívar. "Things have looked even blacker before this. Heaven itself will see that your high purpose is accomplished. What matter if we mortals do not see at present by what means?"

But Pépa clung desperately to Bolívar's hand.

"I do not cry because of patriot defeat," she said. "I know that it will turn into a victory. My heart is broken because I must leave you Simón when you are dying of fever. Who will see that you eat or take a little rest?"

"My dear," replied Bolívar, "you make me smile. I am a soldier. When have I ever had a woman to take care of me? Do you think that hardships are

new to me? Or that I cannot meet them alone?"

They had reached the side of the schooner and the ladies were got on board. Bolívar, shrouded in his cape, said no word to the boatman as he rowed him back to the mainland.

Bolívar returned to Carúpano with Ribas and D'Elhuyar, together with Mariño and some of his officers. They decided to establish a last stronghold on the most easterly part of the mainland of Venezuela. Bolívar still had the twenty-four cases of church silver which, with ceaseless exertion, he had transported through the jungle. It was the sole treasure of the dying Second Republic of Venezuela.

As was to be expected, there was no harmony between Mariño and the officers whom he commanded and Bolívar and his own exhausted comrades.

The place selected, which was to have been the last stronghold of the Republic and from which Bolívar still planned to recruit troops, was Guaira, which lay across the Gulf of Paria—that gulf into which Columbus had been washed by the giant tidal wave. It was decided after much talk and after many contrary opinions had been expressed to embark from this point by sea, putting the cases of silver and the ordnance which remained to the patriots on a ship.

They bargained with an Italian, named Bianchi, who was the captain of a piratical craft, the only vessel large enough for their purpose which could be found. All day the ammunition and the ordnance were loaded into this vessel, after dark the twenty-

four cases of silver were put on board. In charge of it was one of Bolívar's sentries—one who had crossed the Andes with him, a man from Mompox. This man sat upon the cases. He did not like the way the Italians were looking at him. Then when it was dark he saw them cut the cables of the ship! They were going to steal the vessel's cargo. The man from Mompox quietly dived into the sea and swam ashore.

He ran to Bolívar

He came upon the Liberator drinking wine with Mariño. Bolívar was continually trying to gain his confidence, they had been having a talk about further strategy.

The man saluted Bolívar

"Bianchi has cut the cables of the vessel, in the darkness! He is sailing away with the silver! I jumped overboard and came to tell your Excellency."

The two generals looked at each other for only a moment, then by common impulse they buckled on their pistol belts and made for the wharf. There was almost no wind, the rains were ceasing and sultry heat was bringing in the dry season. In a rowboat they pursued the pirate Bianchi.

Out of the dark the pirate heard a shot. Then before he could think again three men were climbing over his gunwale. Bolívar appeared first, Simón was looking right into the muzzle of the pirate's pistol blunderbuss. Before the unexpected vision of the face of the Liberator the pirate's hand dropped, partly by instinctive involuntary respect and partly because of the conscious realisation that there were Venezuelans among his desperadoes. It was dawn.

Now Mariño and the man from Mompox also stood on deck

"We have come to command you to put back," said Bolívar

Bianchi showed his teeth

"My men have not been paid for this voyage. How was I to know, in the state of ruin which is everywhere, whether or not they ever would be?"

"A price was agreed upon which you were glad to accept. How dare you question that you would have been paid upon your arrival in Guaira? I have in mind to kill you as you stand for such an insult."

"No insult was meant, Excellency," said Bianchi

Simón saw where the cases of silver were placed on deck, saw that they were guarded by certain rascally-looking Italians. But his eye went to something more important—cases of rifles, also on deck. On them sat not Italians but Venezuelans. One man he knew. His face, yes. But what was the fellow's name? Then he remembered

Bolívar commanded tersely, "Rufino! Guard the ammunition, you and your men!"

All three Venezuelans moved to the spot where the ammunition boxes stood. Thus they commanded the situation. Or so it seemed. But more pirates, with cutlasses in mouth in true buccaneer style, were coming out of the forecastle hatch.

"Bianchi," said Simón, "you are master of this ship. I have no wish to challenge your command, but while one soul lives in my unhappy country, and until she is free of those dogs the Spanish, I command Venezuela! I will give you the cases of

silver agreed upon in the original bargain, and I will add two cases more. I will forget your deed, but you must put back to port."

The minute was so tense that the pirates took their cutlasses from their mouths, while Venezuelans put hands on the stocks of their guns only. Bolívar's eyes covered Bianchi.

The Italian slowly smiled.

He said, "I do not wish to command Venezuela. I will accept your terms."

He ordered his quartermaster to change the course. Slowly in the light wind, the creaking of the main boom was heard as the vessel came about.

Bolívar and Mariño might quite easily have gone on to Guaira. Mariño wanted to do so.

"No, General," said Simón, "you must remember that my kinsman Ribas and your own officers do not even know where we are. We have no means of informing them. Everything may well go to pieces if you and I are not there to give counsel." He did not say "to command."

Then Simón felt ill. He had not eaten for a long time and there was no escape from the tropical sun which beat on the deck of the vessel. And so much had happened!

The vessel returned. Bolívar and Mariño stepped ashore. They saw Piar—a patriot officer who had recently been attached to Mariño but who was well known to Bolívar—and Ribas advance to them unsmiling as if they Bolívar and Mariño were unknown to them.

"We caught him!" Bolívar called out to Ribas.

"We saved almost all the silver, and all of the ammunition!"

Ribas did not reply

Then Piar spoke, curtly, "You do not deceive us. We both know, as all your officers know, that you have been foiled in a scheme to escape with the treasure and save your skins!"

Dark colour rose in Simón's pale face; he looked at Ribas. His eyes had read his words before they were said.

"You are a traitor," said Ribas to Bolívar.

Again, for the second time in his life, Simón fainted.

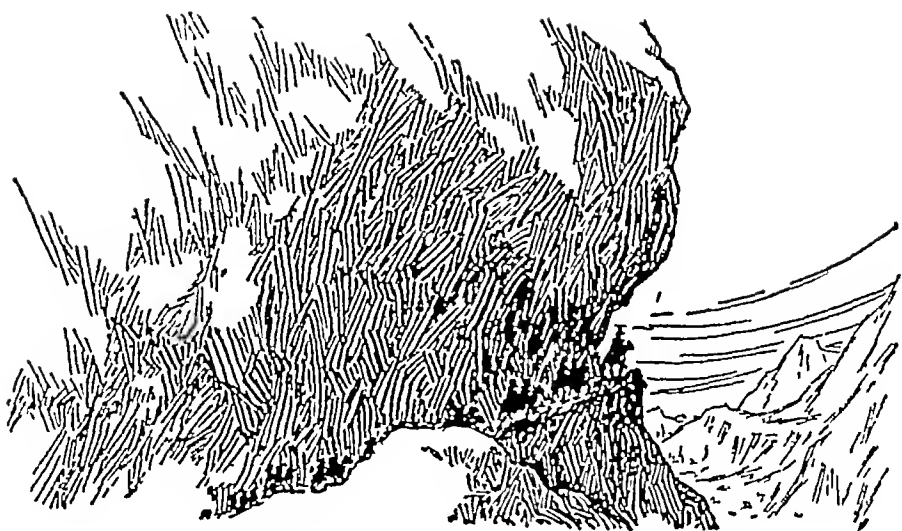
Fantastic as it may seem, Mariño was actually put in prison. No soldiers could be found to lock up Bolívar, who was left to himself in a darkened room. He soon came to, though he was too deathly sick to move. Ribas, the companion of his childhood, his relative—he was an uncle, though little older than Simón—the one to whom he had turned in childhood in admiration—admiration for his gay bravery and for the radical freedom of his ideas—Ribas, with whom he had played around in Madrid, who had been his companion in the Patriotic Society which had paved the way for the freedom of Venezuela! The hero of some of the war's most glorious victories, this Ribas believed that he would turn traitor to his country for some pieces of silver!

"Por Dios, I could not have given more to my country than I have given," Bolívar spoke to himself in the semi-darkness. "My wealth, my slaves, my lands, my houses, my mines, my hope of happi-

ness—even my health. And that energy which was given me by God himself

“My country is lost I have nothing, I am penniless—and now I am friendless ”





XI

ONWARD

A SOLDIER knelt by his bedside and kissed Bolívar's thin hand. His consciousness returned slowly and the words which the soldier spoke became clearer.

"My General, they would have had you and General Mariño up before a court-martial. That would have been bad, even for General Mariño, but for you, Excellency, the Liberator of South America! You would have died. I came and looked at you sleeping, or unconscious—I could not tell which—and I prayed that you would not wake. Not then.

"And now open your eyes, for this which I am telling you is very strange. They say it was General Piar, of the smooth face and the smooth tongue, who

was influencing General Ribas against you. Then General Ribas could stand it no longer. He could not wait for your court-martial. He left this place, they say he has gone to fight, but no one knows where. This is the strange thing. You are not alone anywhere—not even in this place, which is full of soldiers of another commander who have been taught jealousy.

"No one knows how, but the pirate Bianchi got word of these dark doings, that they were saying the Liberator would be court-martialled. And, Excellency, he returned and told his story, everything just as it happened! You are free now. Every one, even here, loves you. And there is a ship at the dock to take you to Curaçao, to the English there. General Mariño has already gone to Curaçao."

Bolívar looked at the man with sick, unsmiling eyes.

"I am too tired," he said, "even to die. If you can dress me I will go with you. One place is like another to me."

On the deck of the ship in the warm sunshine, the Liberator came back to life. It no longer mattered to him that he was ruined. His duty was to his country—"never to allow his hands to be idle or his soul to rest"—and now his prostrate country needed him more than ever. He barely rested at Curaçao. He was ashore only long enough to hear some news.

The patriot Bermudez had been able to kill Boves in battle. Boves, dying too late, said, "Only one thing bothers me—I hate leaving my command to Morales, he is too bloodthirsty! Also it is too bad

that I did not kill Bolívar." Then he added, "But one cannot do everything."

But grief overwhelmed Simón when he heard that Judge Sanz, his old tutor and trusted adviser, had been killed Ribas, who had gone into the wilds and continued his battle against the Spaniards, had been surprised as he slept and murdered by them His head, in the famous liberty cap, was exhibited by the Spanish in the old bloody cage outside the city of Caracas Bolívar wept at this news To lose Ribas, one of his dearest friends and his greatest generals, was hard enough; that he should have died believing the absurd calumny about the silver treasure—without reconciliation—that was heart-rending

Once again he was in the city of Cartagena, the city from which he had begun his startling career of victory and defeat He was alone Only an orderly, the man from Mompox, accompanied him The pomp and circumstance which had, even in the blackest moments, surrounded the Liberator of Venezuela were gone There remained only Simón Bolívar But that was more than enough The New Granadans welcomed him as a hero, not as a defeated soldier

They remembered his honours to their dead patriots, the tributes paid to Giradot and to Ricuarte Their cause was his cause The many messages and proclamations which he had sent them had not been without their full effect He was housed in a beautiful old palace which had belonged to a bishop

There he renewed his acquaintance with Carlos Soubllette, who was half-French and who had been

the aide of Miranda. It was to him that Miranda had said "The trouble with you, Soubllette, is that you are half Venezuelan!"

Bolívar liked the young officer, who became from this time forth his companion, a companion who aided him throughout the rest of his life. Soubllette had also a very beautiful sister, with long red hair—Isabel. She had green eyes. No man of Spanish blood can long resist them.

Yet Bolívar left Isabel and journeyed to Tunja, where he demanded that he be treated as a prisoner. He wanted to defend his case before the Congress of Tunja. Camilo Torres, the President of the Congress, insisted that he sit beside him on the platform.

Then Torres said, "General, your country is not dead while your sword is still alive! With it you will return to rescue her from her oppressors. This Congress of New Granada will give you its protection, for it is satisfied with your conduct. You have been an unfortunate soldier, but you are a great man."

There were cheers and vivas everywhere. But Bolívar at last stilled them and rose to give a clearly analysed account of the causes of the fall of the Second Republic of Venezuela.

We must remember that distances were very great in those days of mule travel over the vast mountains which separated New Granada from Venezuela. Many were hearing the history of the defeat in Venezuela for the first time. The New Granadans had lost men, they had lost heroes in action, but these things only spurred them to new efforts. Yet

because of the encircling arms of the Andes, their country did not lie in waste as did Venezuela. Nor had it been conquered. Only the little port of Santa Marta was in Spanish hands.

Yet in Bogotá things had not gone so well. Nariño, he of the printing press, had been assaulted by a faction of loyalist sympathisers and for the third time in his life was sent to the dreadful prison at Cádiz. It was a long way from the west coast of South America to the terrible prison of La Carraca in Cádiz. It was a long voyage to make in chains. There was now a dictator in Bogotá who was the tool of the Spanish. No longer did the two governments of New Granada co-operate.

The Congress of Tunja had immediate work for Simón Bolívar. They ordered him to march against Bogotá and to restore there a free Republican government.

On his way from Cartagena to Tunja, Bolívar saw a detachment of troops marching. He looked again. He had not been wrong the first time. These were certainly Venezuelan troops. He adjusted his bicorn hat, spurred his horse forward as if he were coming up from the rear to assist them in action.

And then the troops, as surprised as he had been, seeing something very like a vision, broke their ranks and crowded around Bolívar, almost smothering him with their eagerness. These men turned out to be a battalion of General Urdaneta's troops who had, with the customary hardships, crossed the Andes, thus escaping from Venezuela. Bolívar knew and liked the officer who commanded this battalion.

It was the most natural thing in the world for them to march together into Tunja. For Simón it was pleasant to be once more riding at the head of a regiment.

Bolívar sent a message ahead of him, a message to the citizens of Bogotá

"Though I believe that God has destined me to be the Liberator of oppressed peoples, I will never be the conqueror of a single village. The heroes of Venezuela would not have crossed deserts and mountains for the purposes of conquering their fellow American citizens. Our only object is to unite the masses under a single direction in order that all elements may be united for the sole end of re-establishing in the New World the rights of Liberty and Independence."

The route from Tunja to Bogotá was new to Simón. He wound through the mazes of the mountains, crossing abrupt bluffs, descending into rocky ravines, and listening to the prattling of innumerable rivulets descending in sparkling purity over their gravel beds. In the wilderness which covered most of South America at that time, the bits of civilisation were set at great intervals. Cities which were already ancient were surrounded by uncounted miles of primeval jungle or trackless mountains capped with eternal snows. Between these cities no other route was known than the trail broken by the Conquistadores three hundred years before. Miles upon miles of South America had still to be seen by the eye of man.

At this moment, winding with his small company through the dark shadows cast by the Cordillera of

Albaicín, Simón was conscious of the mighty continent Columbus, as those who came after him, even the men who had made cities and cultivated small parts of the land, had not *discovered* South America, they had only glimpsed small parts of it. Would he himself die while it was yet unknown? Looking at the limitless solitudes of the Sierras, he could no longer doubt the answer.

Yet why could not men living in a Garden of Eden which was as large as the whole ancient world, why could they not unite in harmony? It was to this noble end that he would continue to live.

And now the sternness of the mountains began to be broken by white cottages, with thatched roofs, set amid gardens bright with vivid flowers and emerald-green vegetables. In the clear air the azure-blue rebozos, or head scarves, and skirts of the women made them look like the blue macaws which inhabited the jungles so far below them. Quite suddenly from behind a great dark spur of the mountains Bolívar saw the city of Bogotá. It did not look like a reality, for here in the wilderness was set an ancient city dominated by the dome of its cathedral and the tapering finials of its church spires. Two churches were set high above the city, so high and on such inaccessible crags that it seemed as if only the great eagles, Andean condors, or other birds of prey could reach them for worship.

"That is the Virgin of Montserrat," said an Indian who was riding by the side of the general. "And that," he said, pointing to the other shrine, "is the Virgin of Guadalupe. They are so high that only

twice a year do the people make pilgrimages to these shrines. The priests who serve them are hermits."

There was stern work ahead for General Bolívar. The dictator of Bogotá—and the city commanded all the known world which lay around it—had openly asked the co-operation of the Spaniards in defending the city against the patriots. Simón had no sure way of knowing how many divisions might come to the dictator's aid. There was no time to be lost, since his generous appeal had failed.

At night the patriots entered the city. For three days there was fighting in the ancient streets, most of them not twelve feet wide, there was sniping from windows at the barricades below. The men under Urdaneta, who had crossed the Andes, held firm. Alvarez, the dictator, was chased from the city with all the Spaniards whom he had called to help him.

Bolívar was hailed in ceremonies as "Peacemaker" and for one brief moment all the territory which had belonged to the ancient Spanish Viceroyalty of New Granada was once more united. Or so, briefly, Simón supposed. He was, we know, a long way from the coast. Tired of the long public functions, tired of speechmaking, of being the cynosure of all eyes, Bolívar, in the simple uniform of a private, went to sit in a little wineshop among the common people. His face was so new here that he was safe from recognition, he would appear to the men of Bogotá only as one of the soldiers from Venezuela who had come to set them free from Spanish rule. With him went Mendez, his friend and secretary.

They sat sipping sherry, which had come from Spain, during the regime of Alvarez this had become plentiful. But if the Venezuelans had expected to fraternise with the men of Bogotá it was soon evident that this was not to be. They found themselves isolated. Their invitations to share the sherry were refused.

"This leader Bolívar," said one, "he has done all for his own glory. He is avaricious. In Venezuela he even turned pirate and absconded with pieces of silver entrusted to him for the Republic."

Mendez started from his seat.

"One moment," Bolívar said. "Leave this to me." To the man he said, "Why do you scandalise our leader? You do not know him."

"I have my information from those who know him well," said the man. "From Colonel Castillo, who served with him in Cúcuta."

"I had not known that Castillo was in the city," whispered Mendez.

"I am forewarned, and I shall know what to say on the Cathedral steps to-morrow," said Bolívar.

Next day General Bolívar in Wellington boots, in one of the most splendid of his uniforms, glittering with gold, stood upon the steps of the Cathedral of Bogotá. In that sonorous Spanish which he knew how to make so moving, he addressed the people whom he had just freed from Spanish rule. He spoke of the terrible sufferings of Nariño, their former President, who was dear to each man whom he addressed, he recalled to them that, as he spoke, Nariño was chained like a dog to the

oozing walls of the prison in Cádiz. Then he continued

"We in Bogotá have only the news which reaches us, which comes up from the sea, over the inaccessible spurs of these Sierras which hold us up so near to the sky, or news which is borne upstream on the bosom of the Magdalena River. Yet news has come. News which has shaken the world and will soon shake us also even though we may think we are hidden high above the disasters of our sister countries below us. That we are more than five thousand miles from the misery of Europe does not mean that this misery will not affect us. For the news which I have received is that in a mighty battle fought in Flanders at a place called Waterloo the English have finally and forever defeated Napoleon Bonaparte, the Emperor, or Dictator, of France and of most of Europe!

"You say this means nothing to you? Listen King Ferdinand of Spain is now free to send an army against the free men of South America. My information is that he has already done so! That as I speak, on the island of Margarita, off the coasts below us to the west, an army made up of the best troops which Spain can assemble, of men who have fought with the Iron Duke himself, are at this very moment prepared to attack us.

"If you do not appreciate the paradise in which you live there is an avaricious king over the sea—one whom I myself once had the pleasure of defeating, at a game of darts—who does!

"Americans of the Southern Continent! There is no time for division there is no time for dissension,

above all, there is no time for jealousy. Against our common foe we must unite or be made to bite the dust! There is no time for little quarrels. We shall need all our strength. But if we use all of it, we need not have fear; we shall remain free men, we shall be victorious. The very earth on which we stand will fight for us.

"Before you here on the steps of your beautiful and holy cathedral I swear an oath. I will renounce all pleasure which I might have had in leading troops to victory—a victory to which I have dedicated my soul—if I feel, at any time, that another, or others, can do this work better. It is the freedom of South America which I want and for which I am at all times ready to die. Simón Bolívar does not matter."

He stepped down in the midst of vivas which echoed until they deafened him.

The news which Bolívar spoke of to the men of Bogotá was even graver than he himself yet knew. During the years just past, the mother country, herself a vassal of France, had been forced to abandon the struggle for her rich colonies over the sea to chance adventurers.

When Boves had been offered a colonel's commission by his superior officer, a Spanish general, he had replied, "You can keep your Colonel's commission. I make plenty of Colonels myself, every day."

The men who had warred on the patriot troops had been renegades and adventurers, they had had what help the Spanish islands off the coasts could give them, or now and then some arms from Spain,

but in no sense had they been an expeditionary force.

Now Ferdinand had had his throne restored or, rather, he had been set upon it by the events in Europe. He selected a distinguished soldier, Field Marshal Pablo Morillo, who had served with Wellington, to subdue the South American colonies for him.

The plan was, at the very least, comprehensive. Morillo was to take fifteen thousand men, seventy six vessels, and plenty of cannon—there were plenty, the Napoleonic wars were over—and sail for America. He was to begin his work of reconquest in the north, in Venezuela, and proceed to Buenos Aires, not neglecting to pacify all the colonies he passed en route! Then he was to proceed against Mexico. Ferdinand had a timetable. For this job he allowed his general one hundred and sixty days.

The New World was indeed a long way from the old one in those days, perhaps King Ferdinand really believed this could be done. But while the Field Marshal had bitten off so very much more than he could chew, it was entirely possible—in fact, most probable—that he could subdue Venezuela, that country already ruined and weakened by years of one of the bloodiest wars of which history speaks.

As was usual with generals freshly arrived from Europe, this Field Marshal Morillo was splendidly uniformed when he landed on the mainland of South America in Venezuela.

Sailing from the base which he had prepared for his army on the island of Margarita, he met Morales—the successor of Boves. It had finally been arranged not without a few misunderstandings that the two

Spanish armies were to co-operate in the subduing of the country

Morales had managed to collect some five thousand llanero warriors. Before them the Field Marshal in his Wellington boots, his spotless white trousers, and his bicorne hat sat his horse and frowned.

The llaneros sat their little unshod horses, with those long spurs of theirs hitched with thongs to their bare legs. They held their bamboo lances at rest carelessly, at all angles. Some wore no more than a bit of leather for a breechclout, none wore shirts. Their black and filthy hair stuck out from beneath their caps of jaguar skin. They passed the time by making remarks about the new Field-Marshal. He could not understand their barbarous tongue, but he had a rather clear idea of the nature of the remarks. After each one of them there was a savage display of very white teeth. They must have been funny.

"Are these your conquerors, Colonel?" the Field Marshal asked Morales.

"Yes, Excellency, this is my army."

"Just one of my companies could easily defeat them all," said Morillo.

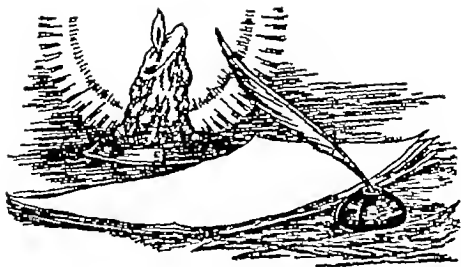
"You think so? I challenge you to try!" said Morales.

Morillo ignored this.

"Either discipline your so-called troops, or disband them," he commanded Morales.

"If I do either one these men will pass to the revolutionists," replied Morales.

He had spoken with the voice of prophecy.



XII

THE JAMAICA LETTER

CARTAGENA WAS the Gibraltar of South America, the strongest city of the Spanish Main. Its fortifications rose high and mighty, coloured a leonine buff, like the great Rock itself. To landward, too, formidable works had been constructed. The walls around the city were thirty feet high and forty to fifty feet wide. Cartagena had been settled only eleven years when in 1544 it was captured by pirates who made this town with the best harbour in northern South America a permanent stronghold—except that once they were rudely shaken by Sir Francis Drake who captured the place and exacted a huge ransom in 1585. Later it was the South American headquarters of the Spanish Inquisition.

Bolívar received formal orders to march to this city and there to join forces with Colonel Castillo. But Simón remembered another expedition in which he had been sent to "aid" this officer and how, after his incredible march over the Andes, he had been received by him. He waited upon Camilo Torres in order that all might be clear beforehand.

"Señor," said Bolívar, "to be plain, Colonel Castillo does not like me. If I march with a force to Cartagena what assurance can you give me that he will submit to my command?"

"Only the assurance that both he and you, General, are bound to execute the commands of the supreme Congress. This is a Republic, both you and Colonel Castillo are soldiers of this Republic." So spoke Torres.

Before such words Bolívar could only bow. Yet his fears were not altogether quieted.

Simón knew men. He asked the Congress not only to grant him clear authority but also to write to Castillo and explain the necessity for selfless co-operation. Then, with all the men he could find, he started down the waters of the Magdalena. They were approaching the mouth of the great river, passing one of the few remaining narrows, when they were stopped by an order. It was from Castillo and ordered Bolívar to go no farther!

Cartagena is unbearably hot, the water supply in those days was foul, and the marshes were infested with mosquitoes. It was at the back of this city and without its fortresses that Bolívar was forced to make camp.

He learned that things were worse than he had feared. Castillo inside Cartagena, had overthrown the civil authorities. He refused, point blank, military assistance or even to share his plentiful military supplies. Bolívar could not bring himself to attack patriot forces. He wrote to Camilo Torres, the President of the Congress of New Granada. In a touching letter Torres reconfirmed Bolívar's authority, and said

"I shall never doubt that Your Excellency is the Liberator whom Providence has chosen for Venezuela nor think a more worthy chief could be placed at the head of this enterprise. My hopes have not been disappointed nor have I regretted my opinion.

With Venezuela lost the writer still believed that she continued to exist in General Bolívar—a belief he will not discard while he lives."

Meanwhile from men from the vessels which plied between the important port of Cartagena and the islands off the coast Bolívar learned of the full menace with which the patriot cause was faced. All that had gone before was as nothing to the strength which was now massed against the defenders of liberty. The full strength of the llaneros, trained in bloody battle under Boyes was now controlled by Morales his successor and this wild force was united with no less than fifteen hundred of the best soldiers Europe could provide. When all preparations ought to be going forward with breathless speed the patriots were divided. Rotting in idleness in the miasmatic swamps at the mouth of the Magdalena.

Was there ever a quarrel, even one between children,

which involved two persons only? Is it not true that the friends of each party are almost invariably involved to some extent? The two patriot armies were headed by Castillo and Bolívar respectively; but with each there was a group of able officers, each group loyal to its chief. With Castillo, for example, was Mariano Montilla, with Bolívar was Mariano's brother Tomás.

It was with Tomás that Bolívar was now talking.

"It shall not be said of me that I do not trust and promote those who despise me personally. I shall recognise no law but that of military expediency. To this end I want you to enter the city of Cartagena under a flag of truce—though to even have to use such a flag among fellow patriots revolts me—and tell Colonel Castillo that I have promoted him to the rank of Brigadier General. Then ask him to deal with a commission who will resolve our differences. I am willing that on this commission there be a majority of his friends—his uncle and your brother Mariano, or any reputable men he wishes to suggest. Tell him that otherwise, in the face of this vast and immediate threat which menaces us, I must resign."

Tomás went as commanded. He returned a beaten and a bloody wreck. Castillo had turned an infuriated mob upon the brother of one of his best officers.

Bolívar no longer hesitated, he resigned his command. He had, after all, no artillery, no means of taking this city, even if he could bring himself to think it right to attempt it. But as usual the Con-

gress would not accept his resignation. They begged him to try once more to bring Castillo to see his country's need. But to his dispatches addressed personally to Castillo, the newly made Brigadier General replied in formal proclamations in which he referred to "the gross ignorance of General Bolívar."

Each day Bolívar hoped to break camp. He saw that his troops were wasting away with fever. And one day there were two cases of smallpox. Then a frightful epidemic. In desperation he occupied the heights above the city, he went through the motions of placing upon these heights cannon which he did not have, and then—it was found that the wells surrounding his new camp had been poisoned!

He went to the tent where a soldier who was barely recovered from smallpox lay dead, poisoned by the well water. Mendez was with him.

Bolívar was very still, he sat holding his chin in his hand and watching the dead man as if he had been his son, as if in this soldier he saw a symbol of all the men who had died in the horrible five months past while he had been waiting without Cartagena.

"Mendez, in less time than I have wasted here I had crossed the Andes, fought many battles, and liberated Venezuela. Do you remember what I said to the people of Bogotá when I spoke to them from the steps of the Cathedral? I said that I would never lead them to victory if I felt that I was in so doing, obstructing the cause of freedom. Though I have given my soul to this cause, I now before this dead man renounce my leadership! I or I see that it leads only to death."

When he heard those words, Mendez cried suddenly as if he had been shot

Once again there was a lonely and penniless fugitive in the West Indies. On the English island of Jamaica, in a modest house, resided the former man of power, Simón Bolívar. The Duke of Manchester had heard great things of this poor fellow. He went so far as to invite him to dinner. He was struck with the man's bearing; his manners were quite as correct, as subtly disdainful, as his own. He chatted about Lord Wellesley, they had many mutual friends in London. They had, as it happened, attended the same fencing school in that city—with different results, however: the South American had emerged a master of swordplay. Once during dinner the host thought that the guest was going to faint.

After he was gone the Duke said to an aide, "Good Lord! That poor devil will not be with us long. The flame has consumed the oil."

Bolívar had not even a change of clothes. He had always loved fine raiment. In this, born to great wealth, he had most of his life been able to indulge himself. When he was in Paris, the friend of Fanny Villars, the sophisticated city copied his long green broadcloth cape with the square shoulders and the high gold-embroidered standing collar. Once more there was no money for the laundress who had to wash and wash again the single shirt he possessed. Lace ruffles began to tear.

Like many fine gentlemen of his age—for even Virginians whose ancestral miles were planted in tobacco scorned to touch the weed—Bolívar could

not smoke. He could not even bear the smell of tobacco. Nor could he drink, he cared only for a little wine, sometimes, at meals. It was necessary that he do something to prevent himself from thinking—thoughts which he could no longer bear, thoughts which would drive him to madness. His days were spent in writing and in endless discussions with the other defeated patriots who were like him, cast away in Jamaica. Chess again, and billiards and darts. And fencing that was the best, after a brisk bout, changing his sword from hand to hand to exhibit his ambidextrous skill, he felt pleasantly relaxed. But in other games he would suddenly break off when he was winning—and strangely, he almost always won.

"I beg your pardon gentlemen. Continue, and excuse me."

Then he would get into his hammock and swing. This swinging was almost like the pace of a caged animal. It punctuated everything he did.

Once unable to sleep, he had wandered the streets of the town all night. Just before dawn he entered his little house quietly like a cat. He heard a hurrying sound, he saw a figure run away. Then a rattling groan. Bolívar lighted a candle. In his own hammock, in that place where he was wont to swing so many hours of the day and night, lay his friend Felix Amestoy, murdered!

He had been stabbed in the neck and in the heart. Simon knew that the knife had been meant for himself.

The police of Jamaica solved the mystery. It was

Bolívar's Indian servant who confessed to this deed; he had been bribed with two hundred pesos by certain Spaniards, whose names he did not know, to murder Simón Bolívar. Poor Felix had come to see his friend, finding him not at home, waiting, he had fallen asleep in the hammock and so met sudden death.

A formal delegation arrived from New Granada. They came from Camilo Torres to beg that General Bolívar return to his command. But, questioning them, he learned that the situation had not changed, except perhaps a little for the worse. Castillo was still in command at Cartagena, the Congress had no real control over affairs. He thanked the gentlemen of the delegation with his usual courtesy, but he firmly declined their proposal.

His brain gave him no peace. He had refused to continue with the hopeless task of freeing countries which did not want to be free. He was too much the realist, too much a man of arms, to call defeat victory. And yet—how could he forget, or even cease to think for one minute of that great purpose of his life? To ease his mind he began to write. Not merely to write those long letters which he had been sending to the Señorita Pépa and to his sister María Antonia at St. Thomas; he now began to write almost a volume. It began where he had left off in the Manifesto of Cartagena.

History calls this document "The Jamaica Letter of Simón Bolívar." He addressed it to his English friend Maxwell Hyslop. It was supposed to be merely a letter from an anonymous South American, but

it reached the length of a volume and contained prophecies which astonish us to-day. Like Jefferson's pamphlet written also as a letter, his "Summary View of the Rights of British America"—which contained the matter he afterwards incorporated in another document, the Declaration of Independence—it was widely circulated, widely read in the United States, England, and France. The future of Latin America from Mexico to Cape Horn was therein set forth.

He foresaw the vast commercial importance of South America, foresaw her balance of power in a world to come, he advocated the building of the Panama Canal. Only since he was writing to an Englishman, he suggested that England open it. Mexico, he said, would have despots for Presidents, and at times monarchies, and then the higher forms of democracy would arrive. Chile, because she was walled away from the rest of the continent by mountains, and because of her racial composition, would reserve her civilisation almost without change and form a stable government. Cuba was to be free! But Peru would suffer greatly because she possessed those two evils gold and slaves.

"The first corrupts all, the second is corrupted by itself. The soul of a slave rarely rises to appreciate ordered liberty, either it rises in furious tumult or remains docile in chains."

Only in the countries nearest his heart did his prophecies fail. New Granada and Venezuela would, he thought, be united in a stable form of government. It is tragic to see his recommendation for the

kind of government which would have brought this about and to realise that had it been adopted the union might have been a reality to-day.

For Bolívar, like Jefferson, realised the difference, the deep racial difference, between the two Americas. He said:

"We were in the position of slaves—not so much because of mistreatment as because of ignorance. We had no part in our own affairs, no knowledge of the science of government or of administration. We were in truth slaves, suddenly risen, without knowledge or experience; we were called upon to play a responsible part in the world as administrators, diplomats, magistrates, and legislators. If we had even so much as managed our domestic affairs before, we should have known something about the nature and operation of a state."

He then recommended the *English* parliamentary system, with a hereditary senate (House of Lords), though these men were to be chosen for ability not for rank, and a legislative body (House of Commons) popularly elected, which "shall have no restrictions other than those imposed upon England's House of Commons."

People in partial ignorance are prone to think that American democracy is based on the English system; it is based upon it, but those differences which seem to them minor, those trammels in the English system which do not exist in the government of the United States of America, are precisely the restraints which in all probability would have saved South America almost a century of civil war.

"I wish to see," he wrote, "the formation in America of the greatest nation in the world."

Then he revealed his dream. He fully recognised that at the time at which he wrote it was impracticable, there were no roads, almost no communications. Yet, some day, he desired to see a union of all the Republics of America, not a tight governmental union but one in which all the Republics of America were to be united in one council chamber. He wanted to see a united front for defence to provide mutual assistance not only against the foreign aggressor, but also against the decaying political beliefs of the Old World.

He saw in his mind a great and permanent Congress which was to meet at Panama and which would "treat and discuss in the high interests of peace and war with the nations of the other three parts of the world."

"How beautiful," he said, "if the Isthmus of Panama should become for us as the Isthmus of Corinth was for the Greeks!"

Dreams and reality. Never so far apart from Simón Bolívar as at Jamaica in 1815. Bitter indeed were the tidings brought to the island by his countrymen in the ships which bore an ever increasing number of desperate refugees from the ruined mainland.

Bolívar could no longer remain inactive in Jamaica. He must return to his Colombia, if only to die there. But he did not yet know the extent of the disaster.

Cartagena in 1815 became a city of the dead. Morillo, gathering his impressive fleet, bombarded the stronghold by sea. By land the llaneros of Morales laid siege. Within those mighty walls the city starved, rotted. The walls were impregnable to the last, but the men within them died while they were dragging their bones over the rough stones of the streets in search of some stray beetle—to eat. Even the moss from the fortress walls was eaten. Six thousand citizens of Cartagena perished, among them an officer who had been deprived of his rank—Castillo.

Some two hundred living skeletons crowded into boats of every description, many of these overladen craft capsized when the open sea was reached. When the Spaniards entered the city three hundred souls remained alive.

Turning up the Magdalena, they offered the Congress at Bogotá honourable terms for surrender. The Congress was without means of defence, even had the terms been less generous they must needs have accepted them.

And then—entering the ancient city without resistance—the Spaniards' first act was to seize six hundred of the leading citizens of the place, that "American Athens," and have them executed in the Plaza Major. Among these was Camilo Torres.

A great scientist was also one of the doomed. He was the naturalist Francisco José Caldas. He was engaged now upon his lifework, a scientific treatise which would record all his original findings. His friends begged the Spanish commander, not to spare

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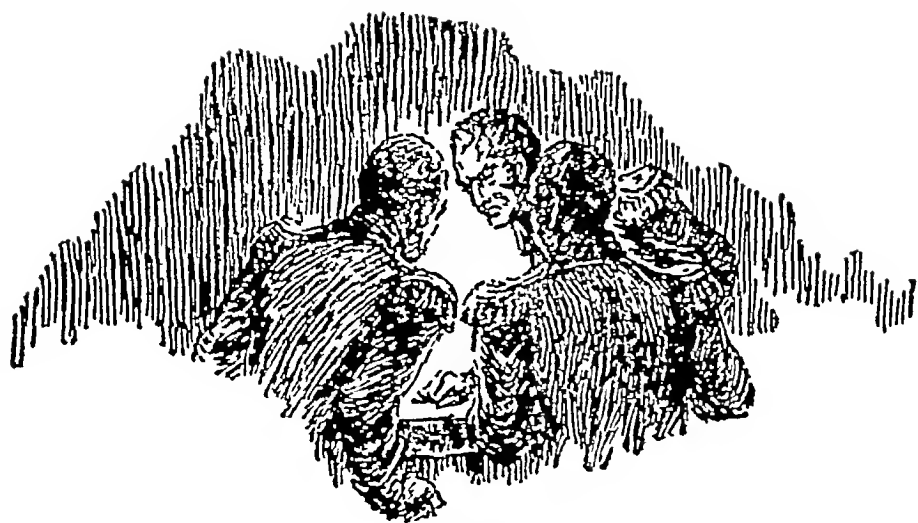
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his life but to delay his execution until this work could be finished. There was an answer to this.

To the naturalist's friends the Spanish commander made this reply, "New Spain has no need of savants."

Bolívar had seen the things he had given his life to broken. there was now no independent government left in the land which Simón Bolívar loved.





XIII

TREACHERY

AGAIN, FAITH Confidence in oneself as an instrument of Providence sent to accomplish an end No man can say that he will win a battle, but no man who is dedicated to a cause should refuse one Yet what if no battle is offered? What if in the abysmal gloom no way forward appears? Even then set your feet upon the way.

So thought Bolívar, getting up from his hammock. He did not know all that had happened on the mainland; he merely sensed disaster. In any case, Jamaica had become intolerable. Better a soldier's death, better anything than this inaction!

He had seen his good friend Fernando Carabaño leave the island, go back to Venezuela, set out full

of patriotism—under an evil star Caraballo had been captured at Mompox, in that city full of gold, where the pink flowers grew by the wayside, he had been beheaded and quartered in the ancient Spanish way.

To some of the uncountable letters Simón had written during this period of forced inaction, there had come answers. To his appeals to Richard Wellesley in London had come a reply, not sent directly to him, to be sure, but a reply nevertheless. It was to forbid retired officers residing in the English islands to enlist with the Liberator. Other nations had treated him in similar fashion.

And then one day a letter arrived from one Louis Brion, a rich young Jewish merchant, his own age. This young man who lived in Curaçao, had a real fleet all his own, he had but just received a cargo of arms from Europe. After the Napoleonic wars military equipment was easy to obtain. He offered his fleet and his munitions to Bolívar.

Simón had replied at once calling him "My dear and worthy friend."

Yet months had passed and there was no reply. It had been Simón now felt, too good to be true. The English affected even on this remote island by the Holy Alliance were turning a colder shoulder to him. Only his friend Maxwell Hyslop and a few of his former comrades still believed in him. It was a time when he had to believe in himself.

He borrowed a final two hundred dollars from Hyslop who had been generous before. With this money he chartered a ship the *Popa*. He headed for Cartagena almost alone.

Sailing on the deep blue sea, the lonely fugitive seemed to see a new world opening before him. He was going back to give battle once more. And then, following the direction in which a sailor pointed, he, too, saw a sail. A privateer. She had a beautiful name, the *Republicano*. The *Popa* glided upon her quarter, having signified her friendliness. The captain of the privateer came on board the *Popa*; he bowed to the Liberator, then he told him the news. He had seen the full extent of the terrible disaster at Cartagena.

"In that city," he finished, "there lives not a rat to tell the tale."

Just in time, therefore, the *Popa* was put about for Aux Cayas, in Haiti.

It happened that most of the slaves on that black island had just been freed. Christophe was soon to be shot to the beating of jungle drums. Pétion, who was President of a large part of the island, had defeated in a glorious action the French Admiral Rochambeau. Pétion had liberated the slaves, and Bolívar was known to have been always the friend of black men. Pétion welcomed the thin man with the brilliant eyes, gave him every honour. More than that, he ordered bread and meat to be given each day to the refugees who came to Haiti always in greater numbers from the ruined mainland. Even more, he issued two hundred guns, complete with powder and shot, to a company which Bolívar was to command. And then a miracle! Brion appeared with his small fleet.

Arismendi, who had nearly conquered his native

island of Margarita, wrote Bolívar offering support. A wealthy English merchant, Robert Sunderland opened his purse. Bolívar was once again a great general.

"It is strange," he reflected, "merely the determination to do something, no matter what, seems to have turned the tide."

He was starved for love. He sent to St Thomas for Señorita Pépa and her mother and for his sister María Antonia. They had been there ever since the mass flight from Caracas. But in those days communication between the islands was both slow and uncertain. They did not arrive. Simón longed for a confidante. His way was difficult.

Simón Bolívar was born to victory. In him there was that peculiarly Spanish masculinity, that pride mixed with generosity, that mysterious personal force for which there is the untranslatable Spanish word "*hombria*." It is impossible not to be torn with pity when one sees such a man robbed of his lawful victories by the envy of his own officers. From this time on he had to wage a war which was more devastating than the one he had waged against the Spaniards. It was the war against the men who ought to have been his brothers. Again and again he forgave them the bitterest insults, took them back into his full confidence. And yet, over and over, they betrayed it. This was the true tragedy of his short and brilliant life.

So it was to be even here in Haiti. It had been decided that from this island an expedition would sail to free Venezuela. It was from the first moment

a known conclusion that Bolívar would head this expedition, and yet Bolívar wished to make the decision legal; he wanted each man to speak

A council was arranged formally at the house of Señora Brúvil. In the centre sat Bolívar. Pétion had arranged a rather high chair for him, perhaps this was unfortunate. Speeches were made. The plight of Venezuela, the need for assistance, was stressed.

Bríón said, "Once arrived in Venezuela, we shall elect a supreme chief. Here it is only necessary to select a commander for this expedition."

Then he nominated Simón Bolívar.

There were loud cries of acclaim. But when the vote was taken three important officers refused to consent, among whom was Bermúdez. It was a bitter humiliation to Bolívar. A setback to his plans.

Nevertheless, late in March seven schooners sailed from Aux Cayas—without Bermúdez. On them were two hundred and fifty men and enough ammunition to supply perhaps four thousand warriors, who it was hoped could be recruited on the mainland. These two hundred and fifty men called themselves the "Liberating Army." They were going to attack at least ten thousand Spanish veterans, not counting the hostile native troops who were in Venezuela!

In the black men's country, which was now barely visible, there had been seemingly endless ceremonies before the final moment of departure. General Bolívar, it had been whispered, did not want to leave. All the men were glad to be at last on the simple business of soldiering. Only General Bolívar looked behind him over the rail to the dim blue mountains.

Then out of the mist came a fast-sailing little vessel which overhauled the fleet of seven schooners. A flag was waved—a man was hoisted on board. He had news for the general.

The Señorita Pepa had arrived in Aux Cayas! Bolívar it was whispered, had prolonged the ceremonies ashore waiting in the hope that she might arrive. Now in the *Constitution*, the fastest of his fleet, he sent three of his officers ashore to fetch her. Meanwhile the fleet of the Liberating Army hove to! The disgruntled Ducoudray Holstein—one of those military men on the loose who had joined the Liberating Army in Haiti and who was to end his career teaching French in Geneva, New York, after having been one of Napoleon's generals—grumbled both privately and publicly about this. It took the Señorita a day to get ready after the *Constitution* had arrived for her.

Then at last the ship returned. Simón, magnificently dressed, went on board and spent that day and the next day with the Señorita and her mother and his sister. Isabel Soublotte was also a member of this expedition. With her were her mother, her sister too, and her brother, who was one of Bolívar's best officers and a dear friend. One of his biographers remarks that all these ladies seem to have been perfectly happy; there could be no better proof of the Liberator's superb diplomacy!

Nevertheless, perhaps it had been unlucky to put back.

There was a sea fight with four Spanish vessels off the island of Margarita. They were heavily armed.

but the fleet of Simón outnumbered them. Two were made prizes

Landing on the island of Margarita, which Arismendi had now made his own, they were warmly greeted. The ladies danced at the great ball in honour of the Liberator. Bolívar was happy, a sea fight yesterday, a ball to-night, a battle on his own soil to-morrow! Life was beginning again.

The next day he said to the Venezuelans of the island of Margarita, "I do not come to impose laws, but I implore you to listen to my voice. I recommend unity of government, and absolute liberty. If we present a united front, if we adhere to a central government, if above all we *unite*, then count on victory."

Later Bolívar was formally elected Commander in Chief, and Mariño was elected second in command—a position this general never liked. But it was time they were leaving the island, the troops had eaten it bare.

When Bolívar landed in Venezuela, his first act was to free the slaves. This was fulfilling a promise made to Pétion. Some of these freed men were immediately enlisted and he began to drill them in the same manual of arms which was used at that time at West Point.

They did not have much time to drill. Bolívar's strategy in planning his return had been based on information to the effect that both the Spanish army under Morillo and the native army under Morales were away in New Granada. He hoped to recapture Caracas before they came back.

The Liberating Army landed in Carupano, a small and squalid port, insupportably hot, smelling of rotten fish. It was here that the ghost of Ribas lingered, for in this very place Simón had heard the words "Thou art a traitor" from the lips of his nearest friend.

That was long ago—or so it seemed. Now three generals walked together down the narrow, dirty street, past the jail. Mariño Piar, and Bolívar.

"Have you forgotten Piar," asked Bolívar, reading the thoughts of the other in the silence that had fallen. "have you forgotten how you would have had me shut up in this same jail as a thief of silver?"

"Do not mention it, I beg you," said Piar, his face reddening. "It was a time of distraction. The wretched pirate Bianchi lied to us all. We were distraught."

"However, for a reason I have never understood, that pirate Bianchi did not lie about me. When my dearest and oldest friends turned upon me, he, a pirate whom I had never seen a week before, became my friend."

Mariño spoke. "That is because you, Bolívar, have a way with men. You merely talk to a blackguard of a pirate and he will die for you."

Bolívar bowed. Generosity he knew was not easy for Mariño.

"I thank you, General," he said. "but I cannot agree."

He was thinking of Ribas, whom he could never bear to name. He was thinking also of the recent discussions in Haiti and, premonitorily, of all the

bitter quarrels which the future held. Why, if the common man loved him, was his career a source of bitter jealousy to the men who shared it? On whom he always studied to heap honours?

"Let us here agree that we will bury the past," he said

"Forgive me!" said Piar. He spoke in humble sincerity.

Bolívar kissed him on both cheeks.

"I follow where you lead," affirmed Maiño.

Perhaps Simón believed them, he wanted to so much.

He dispatched Piar and Maiño, who were becoming the best of friends, inland to recruit among the newly freed slaves. He was not to see them again for a long time. Once lost in the wilderness of the interior, they promptly became their own masters. Every man for himself.

Simón was left alone to plan his campaign.

In order to execute his manœuvre upon Caracas, Bolívar sailed west, beyond the port of La Guaira, to Ocumare. Carlos Soublette, always loyal, and the Scotsman Gregory MacGregor, one of the adventurers who had joined him in Haiti, he sent inland to Valencia, that city which was always the key to Caracas.

Why did he not scout the country first? He paid dearly for his oversight. Morales was not away in New Granada. He was just at the back of Bolívar. With terrible force he fell upon the small patriot force. Soublette and MacGregor were trapped. Bolívar himself was busy unloading the munitions

from the ships. Some of the vessels had already sailed

Bolívar knew nothing of what had gone on in the interior. He was with the munitions. Standing on a balcony of a house which overlooked the harbour he kept his glass to his eyes. In each of the precious cases which he saw unloaded from the ship lay liberty. They represented the defence of Venezuela. Out of these cases would come the miracle which would bring his dead country back to life. That was why he had stayed with the ships. He knew the temptation so many fine arms would present. He was determined that not a single carbine be misplaced, that not a keg of powder be dropped into the sea. Beside him fanning herself, sat the Señorita Pepa. Within asleep in a chair, snored her mother. María Antonia joined them.

"It is time for dinner," she reminded Simón.

"You know that I cannot leave. You ladies go ahead without me," he said.

And then he turned his glass another way. To a cloud of dust on the trail which led inland from the port. No good news could come from that direction! Out of the dust emerged a rider. It was an aide of Soublette who told him the worst—how their detachment had been surprised by a great force under Morales.

"As I speak," the man gasped, "my General fights for his life."

"Sound the call to arms!" Bolívar shouted to a bugler below him in the street who was about to pipe the men to mess.

Galloping all the way, Bolívar led his men to join the battle. But this time he scouted ahead. The action was, he learned, already hopelessly lost. Nevertheless he came up to the battlefield and fought with the fragments of the royalists who remained in the fields. The main body was pursuing Soublette.

And then in force the enemy turned. An army which outnumbered his own force five to one faced him. Bolívar retreated in order, fighting rear-guard actions. He retreated to the sea. All the way to Carúpano, that port of evil omen. Immediately he gave command to reload the ships with the munitions which had been taken off them.

The captain to whom he gave this command saluted and said, "The unloaded ships have departed for Haiti, Your Excellency."

"How many remain?" asked Bolívar, concealing his anger.

There were, it turned out, only three.

"There is no reason to modify my command. Load the ships, Captain. I had rather have the arms sunk than to have them fall into the hands of the enemy." Then, seeing that darkness was upon them, he commanded, "Light flares. We must work all night."

Perhaps in the glare of the torches he saw again the torches of the procession which so long ago had borne his dying bride over the mountain trail from San Mateo to Caracas?

As if in answer to his thoughts he heard a woman scream. The Señorita Pépa had fainted. Before her stood a cavalry officer and María Antonia.

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His sister explained

"This man says that the enemy in vast force is already in this port! We are surrounded on all sides! Pépa fainted, but as for me"—and María Antonia drew herself up like a statue—"my name is Bolívar, and my place is out in front where the peril is greatest."

At that moment Bolívar wished that both ladies had been a thousand miles away. He ordered all hands on board the vessels, the cable were cut, and what remained of the Liberating Army sailed. The Señorita Pépa came out of her faint and scrambled on board with the other ladies.

Just off the coast, Bolívar hove to and, setting his glass to his eyes, watched the port. But he was too far off to see anything. He only hoped that if Soublette saw the fleet he might send a message out to him. But none came. Once more his hopes, his plans, had come to nothing. What was now to be done?

He hoped to join with Mariño and Piar at Guaira. Perhaps they had recruited a large force? With them he might start over again. No man, he told himself, can do better than his best. And yet he knew that in the mighty task in which he was engaged something far above ordinary effort was required. An energy which is genius, that God-given thing, inspiration if you like. He knew this, and yet he found himself very tired. Those cross-wrinkles on his high forehead were getting deeper each day. Nor could he sleep. That oath of his held him in thrall. His soul could not rest.

In light airs the schooners sailed eastwards on the pleasant waters of the Spanish Main. In those days a ship coming into port was descried a long way off and when, by means of laborious tacks, she at last made her anchorage those on shore knew much about her, while those on board knew only to what port they were returning.

So it was that Mariño, Piar, and Bermúdez knew before Bolívar had landed that he must have lost four of his vessels, that since those which were standing in were high in the water there could not be much artillery on board. They had also heard by overland routes that Soublette and MacGregor had been surrounded, that their fate was unknown. They had even heard that Bolívar had retreated in disorder!

We left General Bermúdez sulking in Haiti when his vote against Simón had not been cast with the majority at the council which selected Simón as commander of the expedition. But now with a force of his own he had come to the mainland and joined with Piar and Mariño. All three made a solid front against Simón.

Bolívar, occupied with watching the seamen warp the ships into the little bay at Guaira, of course knew nothing of this. He only remembered his reconciliation with Piar and Mariño before that jail in Carúpano. He saw flags, however, which informed him that these generals were waiting for him on shore. He went to his cabin and put on a spotless uniform. Then he came on deck to await the visit which he expected they would pay him on board his schooner.

But there was no visit. He went ashore. A captain of cavalry went with him.

Was he mistaken or did the people eye him sullenly? Simón was used to public acclaim. He had heard his name coupled with that of the Saints. Was this not then, Venezuela?

"Where is General Piar?" He spoke to one of the patriot soldiers.

The man saluted.

"At the inn, I expect," he said indifferently.

It was there that he found Piar and Mariño—and Bermudez was with them. He now began to understand. Like schoolboys, they did not respond to his greeting. It was a public place. Bolívar was stung.

"Are you in the service of Venezuela or have you turned adventurers?" he asked.

"Do you come among us fresh from the most disgraceful defeat Venezuelan arms have ever suffered—do you come running to us to command us?" asked Bermudez.

The silence in the room could almost be heard. Servants in the act of pouring wine stopped as if transfixed by magic. The jaw of the portly host slowly and silently dropped. Then, as a man with sleeping sickness he slowly turned his head and focused his eyes on Simón Bolívar, the Liberator.

Simón had lived intensely. He had learned self command. He could control that hot wave of temper which made things go red before his eyes.

"Who are you, General Bermudez, that you dare to comment upon my military tactics? As I remember it—and I remember very well—you are not even

a member of this expedition. You voted yourself out at Haiti."

"Perhaps matters would have gone better if Bermúdez had been along," said Piar, curling his full-sculptured lips.

The captain who followed Bolívar muttered, "General Judas "

Simón spoke quietly. "You three were, all of you and each one of you, my personal friends You, Piar and Mariño, only a few days ago. That does not matter to me In the face of our country's ruin you stand to me now in only one relation You are my generals I have come to plan with you the strategy of victory, not to listen to personal insults While I am among you I hold only one capacity. that of Commander in Chief "

Somewhere in the air itself there were faint vivas, they were the echoes of the triumphs of other days

But the swarthy Bermúdez, his face black with rage, got up

"I do not serve under a coward!"

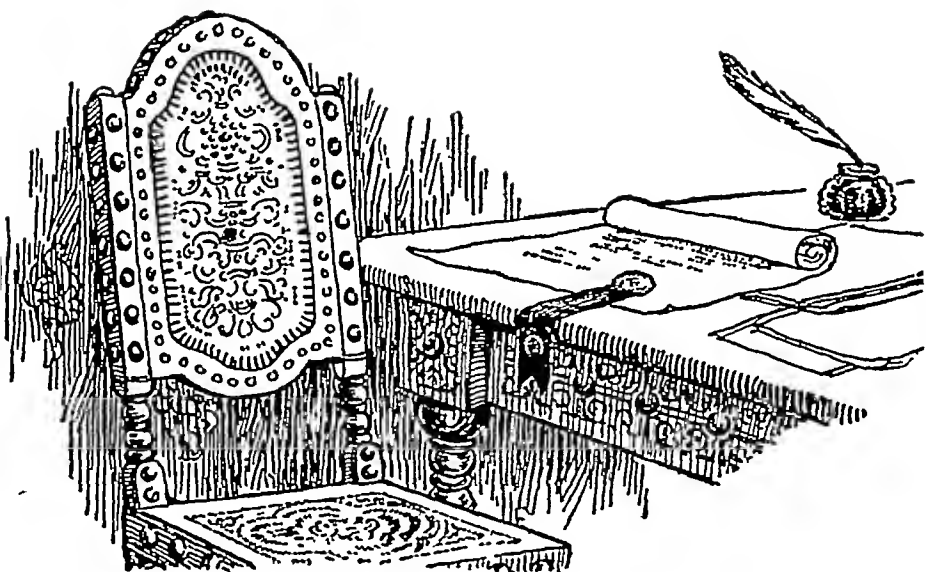
Quickly, instinctively, Simón clutched his sword Then with measured intention he slowly turned his back Bermúdez sprang at him unsheathing his rapier His own officers jumped upon him and pinioned his arms He frothed at the mouth and swore savagely, but they held him Mariño and Piar remained in their chairs, frozen

Out into the glare of the sun Simón walked slowly, unseeing He was followed only by the captain. And then, as he neared the central plaza, he saw a

crowd. Did they expect one of those rousing speeches of his? Well, he could say nothing. Not now. Perhaps never again. He went on slowly, making his way back to the ships. A crowd was following him now. He heard the shuffle of feet, though he did not look behind. It was now not far to the beach. And then he heard them!

For the first time in his life he heard Venezuelan voices chanting in guttural chorus, "Down with Bolívar!"





XIV

THE THIRD VENEZUELAN REPUBLIC

WHEN BOLIVAR and his seven schooners had sailed from Haiti the Spanish Main was a sapphire sea, each wave capped with white foam blown into lace by the trade winds. Now the season of hurricanes was upon him. He intended to sail for the Venezuelan island of Margarita, which Arismendi commanded, but a terrific wind arose. In the fury of the storm there was only one port which the vessels remaining to him could make, Aux Cayas in Haiti.

As before, President Pétion received him with every honour. Arismendi sent to him begging aid, for once again the Spanish were attacking him and his hardy band of fishermen-soldiers. And then there came General Zca with messages from the

mainland. Soublette and his lost battalion had been found. All the patriot commanders who were still waging guerrilla war in Venezuela united in requesting Bolívar to come back and be their supreme chief. They could not get along without him. Finally Brion put into Aux Cayas with the other vessels of his fleet.

Simón had never considered himself defeated. In the midst of the fury of the hurricane when it had seemed very unlikely that his vessel would rise from the deep troughs between the towering seas, he had muttered again, "The art of conquering is learned through defeat." The salt seas which dashed in his face washed away the bitterness he felt for Piar and Mariño. He felt clean and free. All ready to start over again.

Simón Bolívar for the second time set out from Haiti bound for Venezuela. This time he never returned. He never afterwards left the mainland of South America. His first port of call was Arismendi's island of Margarita, just as it had been his first stop on his former expedition. This time he brought Arismendi a vast number of guns and ammunition. Together they embarked for the mainland with more than six and less than seven hundred men.

On the last day of 1816 Bolívar returned forever to South America. He landed at Barcelona.

There he began exactly where he had left off, and at once organised his army to march upon Caracas. But at the River Unare he was overwhelmed by a vastly superior Spanish force and driven back to Barcelona again. It was reported that the Spanish

would surround the town. Simón had lost many men. He repented his rashness. He had been too sanguine. He had felt victory ahead. Yet now he faced annihilation.

Then came the news that General Bermúdez was marching to join him. This was the same general who had barely two months before lifted his sword against him. Bermúdez had frightened away a huge Spanish force under Real, and Simón was assured by one of Bermúdez' messengers that now all animosity was changed. Bolívar determined to see for himself. He rode out in the direction from which Bermúdez was approaching. He saw an army riding with banners waving. As he himself approached, there was the stirring roll of drums. He could no longer doubt the friendly intentions of Bermúdez. He had come to his aid when he needed it most. It was on an ancient stone bridge that the two men met.

"I greet the liberator of the Liberator," said Simón, dismounting.

Bermúdez, whose voice was shaking with emotion, bared his head.

"God bless free America!" he said.

Nor was this to be as empty as reconciliations in the past. Bermúdez was never again unfaithful to his chief.

Soon afterward Maíño, too, came back to be forgiven. He was now in command of a vast army. The generals, however, did not at this time hand over their troops to Bolívar, they were in the capacity of allied generals. In that capacity Bolívar proceeded to use them. There were great plans in his

head these days. He did not propose to make the old mistakes a second time. He had muttered something about a great free country which would embrace not only New Granada but also Peru. The present was merely a stepping stone to the great and glorious future.

Bolívar was going southward—southward to Guiana—and he was going almost alone. He instructed Mariño to follow him with his army but in no case to leave the town of Barcelona unguarded. But Fierres, in command of the town, did not trust Mariño. He implored Bolívar to leave some of his own troops with him in Barcelona. Reluctantly Bolívar complied.

"I am leaving you four hundred of my best troops," he told Fierres. "They are like my brothers. I am sorry to leave them, for such a small force would be helpless if surprised. You must co-operate with General Mariño and send to him at once if the Spanish attack. Scout the country well."

Then he exacted a promise from Mariño to watch Barcelona, to give help at any cost when and if it was needed.

If Morillo had taken all New Granada he, Bolívar would counter by taking the unguarded Guiana. He had learned the bitter lessons taught him by Boyes. In the llanos of Venezuela lay her true strength. He would establish a base at the mouth of the mighty Orinoco, he would recruit the llaneros and supply his army with unlimited beef and the fiercest troops in the world. He knew that the llaneros since the coming of Morillo obeyed no

Spaniard. He was so sure of the success of this plan, on which he had not yet so much as started, that he wrote a letter in which he outlined the whole extent of his ultimate conquest, extending even to Peru?

To come from dreams back to the hot earth of Venezuela, Simón started southward with only fifteen men to join Piar—the only one of his three false companions whom he had not yet encountered.

"The way we are to travel, gentlemen," he said, for the fifteen were all officers, "is hazardous. We face victory or death. No weakness will be tolerated."

They knew that he meant what he said. Yet immediately afterwards he was all gaiety. Making them laugh with his stories, making them sing with his guitar.

As usual he was doing everything at once. He had left Mariño to guard the whole sector around Barcelona; he had sent Arismendi to recruit among the llanero chiefs with instruction to address each as "Señor General." Meanwhile his other generals were waging guerrilla warfare as opportunity offered. The great Field Marshal Morillo was getting sick of the whole thing. He wished himself back in Spain once more and Venezuela with the devil.

But now Simón realised he must be careful not to get killed and spoil all his plans by a bit of carelessness. The Spanish were pursuing the fifteen men. They knew that one among them was of tremendous importance. It would mean a handsome reward and much glory to kill Simón Bolívar.

To get to his destination Bolívar had to cross enemy territory. He was riding in front of his little

band. He came out from the darkness of a forest and there right before him was a whole column of Spanish infantry.

Instantly Bolívar struck one of those equestrian statue poses of his. He reared his horse, spurred him forward and with a fine frenzy commanded, "First battalion to the left! second to the right! Cavalry, follow my charge!"

The whole Spanish column turned and fled. Bolívar pretended to follow, with his fifteen men he galloped furiously—into a wood. Then the Spanish discovered their mistake. But the dense jungles were all but impenetrable. If a man was not afraid of the poisonous snakes, the stinging biting insects, and the vampire bats, he might hide himself safely.

It was night. He must cross the wide Orinoco swollen by floods. Simón left all his companions, only his secretary Méndez, went with him. They left even their horses behind. Simón had come upon a little boat—too little for two men, yet it was all they could find. In the swift, strong current they were nearly spilled to the two alligators which followed.

But what is that in the darkness?

"It is the Spanish. I hear them talking. There must be at least twenty of them," breathed Méndez. "They have a big boat, they will surely overtake us."

"Not surely, if we paddle hard," said Simón.

Just ahead of their pursuers they reached the slippery shore, like beasts they plunged into the rank wet jungle. The briars, long as daggers, tore

their skin cruelly but protected them from the enemy

"Stay here Let them go ahead by the open path. They think we are ahead of them," whispered Simón.

In the dawn, with bleeding faces they crept towards the Spanish camp. Horses they must have, horses they must capture Like an Indian, with that incredible agility of his which astonished every one, Simón crept up to the horses He thought of his boyhood on the llanos, of catching his first wild horse. Suddenly, with a ferocious spring, in one movement he had caught a horse and mounted it Mendez had been fortunate too Crashing through the bushes, they plunged away Shots whistled by their ears They only spurred the frightened horses

Night again and streaming rain Then, stretched on the ground under his fine broadcloth cape, deep sleep It was still night when he awoke The ground seemed to be shaking under him, he had been dreaming of the first roar of the earthquake at Caracas He reached over and touched Mendez

"Listen," he said

There was the unmistakable beat of savage drums

"It is a war dance," Mendez whispered in horror

"Is your powder dry?" asked Bolívar

They carefully tested the brace of pistols which each wore The rain had not damaged them or wet the powder in their flasks Simón long ago on the llanos had learned to keep his weapons dry in the streaming rains of the tropics.

"Let's see what they are doing!"

Simón and Mendez crept forward through the

jungle, guided in the blackness by the sound of the tom toms—louder and louder. Between the trunks of giant trees, through the leaves of vines, each leaf half a yard from stem to tip they saw the war dance. They heard the soprano yells of the wild men as, covered with red paint, they danced in a circle around the fire.

Throwing his cape off one shoulder, managing somehow in this wilderness to look like a Marshal of France in Paris on leave, and taking care to let the firelight gleam on his rapier and on the silver stocks of his two pistols, General Bolívar strode into the circle of the war dance. The yells became more and more infrequent yelps. No savage dance suddenly stops, there was only a diminuendo.

"I greet you brothers," said Simón. "I seek to do homage to your chief."

An old wrinkled man sat in the crotch of a tree holding a pipe which was not lighted. Faint streaks of dawn, and then, quite suddenly, the day broke through the wet leaves of the green jungle. The warriors broke away from the dance.

The chief motioned Simón to a seat by his side.

"You are Simón Bolívar the greatest chief of them all," said the old man.

Simón bowed gravely before he took his seat.

"I have no need to be told that you are a mighty chief," he said. "Upon whom do you make war?"

"I am of the council of the white men," said the chief, speaking in a half savage Spanish. "Most of the men of my tribe served the monks who have the great mission on the river Caroni—which flows

southward from the Orinoco, which is the father of waters. But now those monks are dead, and my men would kill their murderer."

Mendez looked at his commander. He, it was evident, did not relish his situation.

"And who murdered them?" asked Simón.

Out of his oblique eyes from which radiated a thousand fine wrinkles, the chief looked long at Bolívar.

Then he said, "Thy mortal enemy, Piar."

Slowly the story was told. It was told because the chief knew that Piar would kill Simón Bolívar if he could and because he hoped that he could combine his own forces with Bolívar, whose name was already a watchword among the most remote tribes of Guiana. Simón, emerging from the jungle in a formal uniform, had impressed the old man. He had fitted into the word pictures which Indians know how to make.

This was the chief's story:

Piar had recruited over one thousand Indians into his army of two thousand men. But he beat them into submission, and he had captured many of them from the monks who for generations had administered the great missions on the Caroni River. Twenty-two monks, all the brothers who lived in the largest mission, had been murdered, their riches stolen. The chief, who was a devout Catholic, crossed himself.

But, with the help of his captured Indians, Piar had won a big victory. He had defeated a whole Spanish army. He was laying siege to the city of

Angostura. Now he controlled every animal and every fighting man in the whole Orinoco district. Except that he, the chief, was raising here and there, and in great secrecy, an army of Indian guerrilla bands who were to fall upon small isolated detachments of Piar's army and murder them Indian fashion when they ventured too far from known trails alone.

The chief said that Piar's plans were to seize the supreme power in Venezuela for himself. These plans included getting command of the llanos and murdering Bolívar. Not to murder him in such a way that it could be supposed that he, Piar, had anything to do with it. It was to be done, said the chief "by Indians."

Again there was an unhappy look in the face of Méndez, who was also hungry. But presently they all made a ceremonial breakfast upon dried beef.

Bolívar saluted the chief as "Brother" and "Ally", he enlisted his braves as scouts on the spot. They were in strict truth at this very moment the whole extent of his army, for Mariño was not coming to join him as he had promised. Thus Simón did not suspect. But he had heard enough from the chief to cause him to decide that it would be wise to visit Piar not alone but with the comforting support of troops—no matter how few. He sent messages to the men whom he had left on the far bank of the river to join him. He made camp on the river about fifty miles away from Piar. Here he awaited Mariño and news.

There was plenty of news but no Mariño. It was

Bermúdez who marched with his army to join him. And Bermúdez was not alone, with him came Soublette and Arismendi

Maíño had no sooner been left to his own devices than the very idea of following Simón became intolerable to him. He was busy setting up a government of his own. He even, in the end, went so far as to send envoys to the United States and to other countries announcing that a stable government had been formed in Venezuela and that he, General Maíño, was the President of it

Then the town of Barcelona had been attacked by the whole southern division of the Spanish army. Bolívar's four hundred picked men had resisted, literally to the last man. The citizens of Barcelona had been cruelly slaughtered, for the official instructions of the Spanish army read in part

"Burn cities, behead their inhabitants, ravage the country; respect neither age nor sex, replace the peaceful farmer with the ferocious warrior, who is the instrument of the vengeance of an angry king"

In the face of all the threats and disasters which were happening—and he knew that his life was not charmed, that battles could be lost as well as won—Simón never lost heart. In spite of everything, he kept himself happy—happy and incredibly active. He attended to his own horse, yet he was always himself as clean, with nails as carefully manicured, in the half wilderness as was any Parisian gentleman of fashion. In the light of campfires, pacing up and down, he dictated the most flowery and formal letters. His movements were like those of a hunting

fall of the city came when Brion arrived up the river with that fleet of lus which was always so useful. In a picturesque action on the river, with the flecheras of Bolívar harassing the cumbrous Spanish gunboats, Angostura fell to the Liberator.

But the same day there appeared once more the hydra with the many heads, for Piar entered the city. Instead of going away he had succeeded, by claiming that he was himself of Negro blood, in stirring up a most dangerous revolt among the mestizos or mixed races in the interior. He came now to put the last finishing touch to his work. He approached the generals who surrounded Bolívar. Whispered words of slander against the leader of promise to themselves.

But this time he miscalculated. It was Bermudez who turned on him savagely.

"You are a dog, Piar, but not even a black dog as you claim," he said.

Then he reported the whole extent of the plot which had so nearly succeeded in undoing all that Bolívar had built up.

Bolívar summoned Piar but he had already escaped. Simón sent General Cedeño to bring him back. This time there was a court martial. Simon said, "If the council applies the maximum penalty, I profoundly hope that they will leave the way open to me for commutation."

In the trial Soublette was named attorney general and Brion, who was a compatriot of Luis—for, legends to the contrary, his birthplace was Curaçao—was president. Thus he was judged by men who

were his former friends. Several of his own officers were also members of the court-martial.

Piar was charged with insubordination and sedition. He was charged with seeking to incite a counter-revolution among the blacks and the half-blacks. He did not speak in his own defence and he did not deny these charges. He was found guilty, sentenced to death. Bolívar, the Commander in Chief, signed the death sentence; as he did so, he wept. He struck out the clause which called for military degradation. The city in which these tragedies were going forward had been more than half won by Manuel Piar.

His death was worthy of a patriot general. Facing the volley of the firing squad, he cried, "Viva la patria!"

Gravely the other generals gathered about the council table next day. Here in Angostura the government of the Third Venezuelan Republic was set up. There were departments of State, War, and Navy. There was a Treasury Department and the framework of a Judiciary. In London, López Mendez, who, you will remember, accompanied young Bolívar on his first diplomatic mission to that capital and who had been there ever since, had succeeded in raising both money and men for the patriot cause. Urdaneta, the veteran of the Andes campaign, with a large army under his command, had come to join Bolívar at Caracas. There were, it was estimated, in all parts of Venezuela more than six thousand two hundred men who supported the patriot cause. These were still widely separated, and as yet they

were outnumbered by their enemies. Nevertheless, things were going well in Angostura. More and more news began to arrive from the llanos. There a mighty young general had arisen. He alone was able to lead the wild llaneros. And he led them to defend the independence of his country. At this time José Antonio Páez was twenty-seven years old, but he was the leader of ten thousand fierce llaneros.





X V

THE CHIEFTAIN OF THE PLAINS

IN A VILLAGE of huts in the lower spurs of the Andes, where these mountains slope down into the llanos of Venezuela, a boy was born in bitter poverty. Though his skin was dark leather from the sun, his hair was fine, very light brown and his eyes were blue—the signs of white blood. This boy killed a man. No one ever was to know the true story of this crime, the boy was less than twelve years old and he said that he killed in self-defence, that he was being tortured. He ran away from his poor home and took refuge on the limitless llanos. There he was brought up by a big negro, who used him as a slave. The boy's name was José Antonio Páez.

At Angostura, Bolívar was near the llanos and

many of his old companions, those vaqueros, or cowboys whom he had known so long ago when he and Rodriguez had visited the llanos, came to him to pay visits half in homage and half in curiosity, for they had heard that Simón Bolívar had become a mighty general. He always asked them about their new leader, for the boy Páez had succeeded Boves in the llanos. He now commanded no less than ten thousand wild cavalymen. He boasted that each of these owned an extra horse. He was a rich man now, owning uncounted herds of cattle and sheep. The llaneros were ready to die at his word.

Páez had subdued these tough warriors by personal prowess. He would punish wrongdoers by personal combat. Leader and culprit would fight it out. Páez always won. He could outride any one of his men and he could excel them at darts or in the game of throwing bulls by twisting their tails. There was another vast difference between the new leader and the old. Páez was sincerely devoted to the patriot cause.

At this time Páez had never seen a city—strangely enough he died at the age of eighty three in New York. He could neither read nor write but he could do something else which the llaneros understood better—he could win battles.

Three thousand Spanish regulars were marching in the glorious panoply of battle across the plains. Their brilliant uniforms had not yet been faded by the sun. They were commanded by La Torre and there were three thousand of them. Páez was riding with a company of five hundred horsemen. He called

a sudden halt. He knew by the little cloud of dust in the far distance that the Spaniards were approaching. He hid his men.

Páez had never faced artillery. He did not care to face it now. He waited until night. In the darkness his scouts crept up and watched the enemy make camp. Watched them unloose the galled horses which had been drawing the guns and saw them put their own three thousand mounts into a rope corral. Those cannon would be no use to the enemy at night, but their own horses might destroy them. We must remember that the llaneros were true centaurs—half man, half horse.

Part of the llanero's equipment is a great square of raw leather. In this he keeps his belongings, with it he covers himself at night, protects himself from the tropic rains, shields himself from the fiery sun.

At the battle of Mata de Miel, for that was the name of the place where the Spaniards encamped, these squares of leather became something else too. artillery. For this was the plan which Páez executed. He always rode with at least fifty wild horses in reserve. To the tails of each of these a square of leather was tied, it drove the horses wild. Then—breaking the rope corral while the Spaniards slept, shouting like demons and whipping the wild horses forward, into the midst of the Spanish horses—the llaneros attacked.

Terrifying confusion was the inevitable consequence. Again and again, forming without commands as was the llaneros' way, Páez' men charged

into the stampede caused by the terrified horses. The untamed horses of the llaneros, lashed by the leather tied to their tails, went mad. The Spanish horses stampeded.

Yet La Torre, who was commanding, with that Spanish bravery which was never lacking in these campaigns rallied his ranks. Stubbornly fighting each inch of the way, they retreated in order into the forest which lay at the back of them. But the Spanish losses were terrific. Nine hundred men were killed or taken prisoner. In the sudden light of the tropic dawn the llaneros, many of whom had joined the battle with nothing more in the way of a uniform than a breechclout could be seen dressing themselves in the brilliant military finery which had been made in Madrid.

More recently, when Bolívar had been operating on the lower reaches of the Orinoco River there had been another victory for young General Páez. He was faced with fifteen hundred regular Spanish cavalry and with three thousand infantry. He had himself eleven hundred of his best men, all mounted. With these he took a windward position.

In this his strategy was clever for it was now the height of the dry season. The terrible pitiless sun which the llaneros always called "the enemy" had burnt the helpless earth. At the slightest stir clouds of dust rose. These acted exactly like a smoke screen and Páez by getting to the windward of the enemy could by any movement of his horses blind and choke the Spaniards with dust.

In the dry season big grass, taller than a man, with wide sharp leaves—like crabgrass enlarged a thousand times—grew all over the plains. This grass was brown now, burnt crisp by the sun. The grass cut man and horse as the edge of brown paper can cut. It, too, was covered with choking dust.

Tropical dawn came with startling suddenness. The horsemen of Páez, mounted on those silver-grey horses of theirs, those descendants of the Arab horses which had been brought over the ocean by the Conquistadores, stood upon the crest of a hill. The Spaniards could not tell how many horsemen lay behind them. Some of the plainsmen were dressed in jaguar-skin caps; some wore the bear-skin shakos of dragoons, but all stood still like frozen men.

Before the lances of the llanero cavalry the Spanish right wing gave way. But in the centre of the Spanish force was a veteran regiment of Spanish hussars. Their shakos were draped with golden cord and over the shoulder of each man hung a small yellow pelisse, or cape. Dressed as they had been during parades through the boulevards of Paris, in white broadcloth—for these troops were veterans of the Peninsular wars—they stood in the broiling sun and fought. The furious charges of the wild horsemen, their savage yells, and their deadly lances did not move these Spanish hussars. Behind their immovable stand the better part of the army retreated to the thick tangle of trees in their rear. These hussars were one of the crack regiments which had accompanied Field Marshal Morillo to the New

World. The flower of his army was facing Páez. The llanero chieftain saw the Spaniards' retreat to the trees, he knew as they did not, that it was no vast forest which they were entering—only a tangled growth of a few trees around a water hole. A charge of llaneros was directed to get at the back of the dragoons and then to spread out in all directions provided only that these directions were to wind ward. These men carried torches. They set fire to the high brittle grass!

The circle of fire drew about the hussars. Through it jumping high in the air to avoid the flames the llaneros still charged. Out of the smoke and flame horsemen would suddenly jump at the choking Spaniards. Only the water hole saved them from total destruction.

This was Morillo's first defeat on American soil. It was a severe one. He thought of his words to Morales, of his low opinion of these savage-looking warriors when he had first reviewed them. And to the King of Spain he wrote

"Fourteen consecutive charges on my weary battalions showed me that those men were not a scanty band of cowards as I had been informed but organised troops able to compete with the best in your Majesty's service."

These were the stories which Bolívar heard of Páez. He was determined to win this warrior to himself. He had long been convinced that the llanos held the key to Venezuelan victory. Here was a leader ready to his hand. But would this leader

follow him, or would lie, like so many others of less might, try to keep all his power for himself? Could he make him see that in union there was strength?

Bolívar was in a strong position at Angostura, but this position was now threatened. Angostura is now called Ciudad Bolívar. now, as it was then, it is one of the most important cities in Venezuela.

The currents of two mighty rivers carried Bolívar to victory, the Magdalena and the Orinoco. The mightier of the two was the Orinoco, which at Angostura connected Bolívar with Europe itself. The Orinoco is more than fifteen hundred miles long. Through the Apure, which flows into it, the very snows of the Sierra Nevada of Mérida, which had witnessed Bolívar's triumphs after he had crossed the Andes, were washed past Angostura. Another branch, the Meta—so called because it is formed by the junction of the rivers Negro and Humadca—carried water whose source was almost at Bogotá itself. To Bolívar the Orinoco was a symbol—its mighty arms embraced much of the territory he dreamed of uniting.

Even to-day steamers may navigate seven hundred miles from the mouth of the Orinoco. At Angostura, three hundred and seventy-three miles inland, it is nearly a mile wide. Moreover, it is peculiar in that the current carries vessels downstream, while the steady trade winds blow them up, so that by the simple process of setting their sails or fuelling them, in Bolívar's day, ships might go and come at will.

This old city on the banks of the great river made

a gay picture. There were many houses of brick and some of whitewashed stone. They had little iron balconies painted emerald green. The church stood grim and fortresslike in the centre of the town, while, Government House, in which the new Congress met was gleaming white with the usual ornamental green balconies. The intricate patterns of the ironwork spirals seemed to have been inspired by the fantastic growth of the vines and creepers of the jungles which lay just beyond the city.

The inhabitants of Angostura have always been prone to enjoy themselves—whenever they could. Just now it was a place of gaiety. Bolívar knew that in the bitter war he waged there must be periods of rest even of festivity. As they trod the hard road which led to victory his warriors must stop now and then to enjoy the gains which had been made. No matter if these gains were as nothing to the great things which lay ahead.

That certain of the royalist ladies of the city had been caught just in time in a plot to murder Simón as he entered the church to hear Mass did not bother him for long. He was dancing late that same night with patriot ladies, who clicked castanets instead of daggers.

At Angostura he commanded all the vast system of waterways which made a network over southern Venezuela the district which was then called Guayana. And from the mouth of the Orinoco which opened into the Atlantic came men and munitions sent by López Mendez in London.

Southward lay the missions captured by Piar,

around them the incredibly fertile lands which the Indians, directed by the monks, had tilled. There was unlimited food for all. His army was growing, he had even had a moment to drill his troops, and he had been able to establish a provisional government—a congress of sorts was meeting in the white house with the emerald-green balconies, Government House. Only one thing seemed now to be needed, Páez. Bolívar well knew the real insecurity of his position at Angostura if he could not control the llanos.

With joy and relief, therefore, Bolívar read the reply to his message to the leader of the llaneros. Páez wanted to offer his services and those of the men who followed him to the patriot cause. He had, he said, long been an admirer of the Liberator, he recognised in him a superior leader.

Bolívar rode into the llanos to meet Páez, the second most important figure in the War of Independence.

Páez knew all about Bolívar. His exploits had begun already to be woven into a legend. At night before the campfires the llaneros sang *corredos*, those folk ballads, composed no one knew by whom, which told of the daring deeds of Bolívar. His name was already a legend. Páez knew, too, that Bolívar was the one, and the only one, who could save Venezuela. Páez was a sincere patriot—and yet he almost dreaded this meeting. For, strangely, this son of the plains, this centaur who could lead wild men to victory, was socially ambitious. He was already beginning to be ashamed of his lack of learning, to

regret bitterly that he could neither read nor write
He was feeling shy

In the distance, in the dust, Páez picked out, with those keen eyes of his, General Bolívar riding in the midst of his officers. He was wearing spotless white broadcloth trousers, Wellington boots, a blue coat decorated with gold and a cockaded bicorne hat. But Páez was looking at his horse.

"Why," he wondered, "if I have become almost half a horse myself, why, if since I was born I have been on a horse's back, why does the Liberator ride a better horse than any I have ever seen?"

It was a real puzzle, for Páez had captured all sorts of fine horses which the Spanish had brought from Spain.

Bolívar too, saw Páez from a great distance, he saw beside him the giant negro who always accompanied him. This was El Negro Primero, whom Páez had rescued from Spanish tortures and who was more faithful to him than any dog. He was quite literally his shadow. A big black shadow, for El Negro Primero was six feet three.

Bolívar dismounted and was followed by his beautiful Arabian stallion. Páez also dismounted though he was conscious of his small twisted legs. The two generals kissed on both cheeks.

"It is a proud day that I meet the greatest warrior the plains of Venezuela have ever produced," said Bolívar. "Your exploits General are already written in the book of history."

"Whatever I have done," replied Páez. "I have done in the cause of patriotism. As you are the man whom

destiny has selected to deliver Venezuela, I now present to you myself and my army. Lead us to victory!"

Then in the manner of llanero chiefs, who always derived their authority from their troops, Páez presented Bolívar to his men. On his white horse Bolívar bowed with a sweep of his hat, and received wild acclaim. He heard for the first time that name which the llaneros bestowed upon him, the name which was the sign of their highest approbation. "Old Iron Seat."

Bolívar saw in Páez' troops a much finer army than Boves had ever commanded. Each man was mounted on a silver-grey horse, many were armed with magnificent Spanish rapier. The troops were as sleek and round as their horses.

The moment of formality had passed. Now Páez and Bolívar were riding side by side, their horses at a walk. Páez was suddenly shy. Bolívar was, after all, the city type, the man of fashion.

"You have a fine mount, General, and your orderly must take very careful care of him," said Páez.

"No, General," replied Bolívar, "my orderly never touches my horse. I groom him entirely myself."

In the quick glance of Páez' blue eyes, Simón read a sudden childlike friendliness. It was true he did groom his own horse, but now this peculiarity was returning more dividends than the satisfaction he felt in the sleek white of the animal's coat. It had, he knew, won him the sincere friendship of the man in all South America who could be of greatest use to the cause to which he was giving his life.

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Three men rode northward, three armies *marched* upon the Spaniards Páez and his llaneros, well fed and sleek Bolívar and the ragged boys and old men who followed him—men of every colour, recruited everywhere Gone now were those high-spirited Creoles, men of his own caste who had fought his earlier battles, climbed the Andes with him Most of these had died on bloody battlefields or perished on bleak sierras There was another army, too, led by a dark and sinister general A man with a fine mind a man of ability and courage—and a man who hated Simón Bolívar This was the former Major Francisco de Paula Santander He knew well how to hide his thoughts Now he was leading a force of New Granadans to fight the battles of Bolívar He was himself taking orders, cheerfully

These three rode together at the head of their troops In the pages of history these three men occupy the positions of greatest significance in the War of Independence In the end, though bitter quarrels, treachery and death itself was to ride with them, they were destined to win the great battle they were fighting They were destined to liberate the great northern half of South America

But now the columns had arrived at the Pass of the Diamond on the banks of the wide river Apure Dense jungle clad both banks of the river There was but one place at which a landing could be made upon the opposite shore And between the patriot armies and this place lay a squadron of small Spanish gunboats! The patriots had been relying on some native canoes in which to cross this river at this

point a quarter of a mile wide and flowing with a swift and treacherous current. But these canoes were lost.

Simón well knew that if they stayed where they were as much as two hours the news of their whereabouts would be known to Morillo, they would be caught in an almost hopeless position between the dense jungle and the river. He did not say what he was thinking. It had long been his habit to assume a confidence which he did not always feel. Yet he could not keep his eyes from the river.

"Let me get boats for you, General," said Páez.

"Where?" asked Bolívar, a little sullenly.

Páez reined in his horse, pointed with his gold-hilted sabre at the river—at the Spanish gunboats.

"There!" he said. "With your command."

What crazy idea did this llanero have? wondered Bolívar.

To Páez he nodded, feigning gravity. After all, anything at all to divert the Spaniards on those boats, anything to prevent them from sending out runners to inform of the patriot position.

"Do what you can, General."

He recognised this moment as one of the many in his life when some detail gone wrong, like arriving at this river without boats, might forever and forever wreck his cause. At first he did not watch Páez; his thoughts were too engrossing. And then he did, with all his eyes.

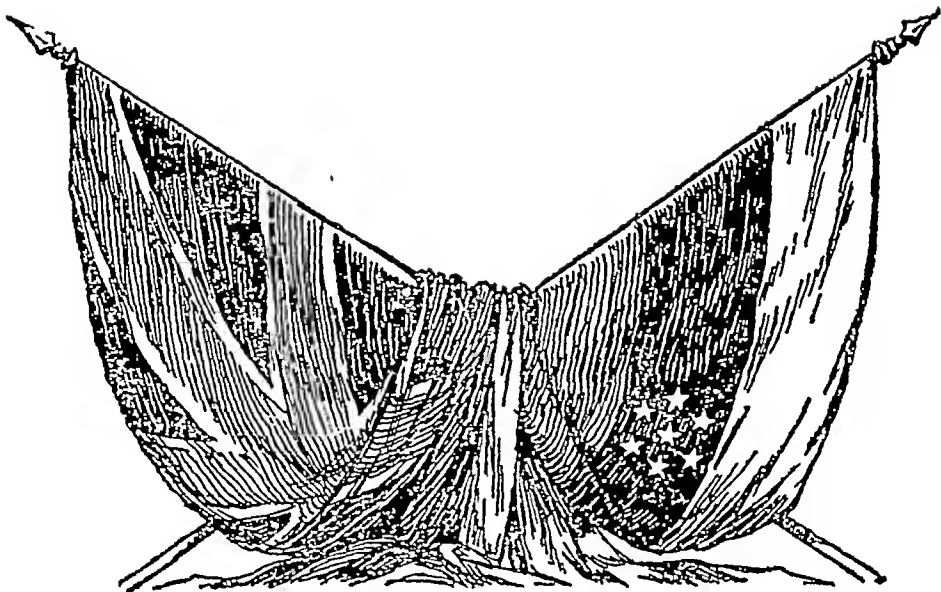
Páez had put himself at the head of fifty men.

"These are the best swimmers in our army," said a llanero standing near by. Bolívar watched while

the saddle girths were loosed. Then Páez himself led a furious charge down the embankment to the river. Before entering the water each man threw his saddle behind him without dismounting. Then they put the reins in their teeth. Held their famous lances high and were carried along into the current of the river by their horses whom they guided with perfect skill by dashing water on their heads now on this side, now on that.

On the banks their comrades, deliriously excited, kept up a deafening savage yelling. The Spaniards who manned the gunboats, seeing a force start across the river upstream out of gunshot had been watching stupidly expecting the horsemen to drown. Then, with a sudden fury quite unexpected, the men and the horses were upon them. Only a few had time to load their pieces. Pirate fashion, lance in hand, the llaneros climbed over the gunwales of the boats. The terrified Spaniards leaped for their canoes, with the llaneros and their horses swimming after them.

Bolívar saw that Páez had taken all the gunboats and all the canoes without losing a single man. Mr. Cunningham Graham writing the military history of South America, remarked that this was perhaps the only time in military history that cavalry had been used against armed vessels.



XVI

THE BRITISH LEGION

MARCHING NORTHWARD from the river Apure, at Calabozo, Bolívar, supported by Páez, won a brilliant victory over Morillo. He saw the Spaniards in full retreat. Night was upon them. The battle was over. He rode back to his headquarters full of plans, feeling that at last the war could be won—perhaps at the end of this very campaign. Even Santander was sanguine.

“My compliments to General Páez, and will he do me the honour of sharing a bottle of wine with me.” Bolívar was addressing an orderly.

After a long time Páez entered the small hut which served the Liberator as headquarters.

“We have the Goths on the run”—it was as

"Goths" that the Spaniards were known in Venezuela—said Bolívar after he had greeted his new general.

Then he went on to tell Páez of his plans for finishing the campaign, how he would pursue the Spaniards, giving them no rest. How they would drive them from Caracas and win the war.

"When they retreat, it is the signal for us to attack," he finished.

But Páez was silent.

"Have you another plan?" Bolívar asked him.

"It would seem to me better," said Páez, "to retire to San Fernando."

"San Fernando? Why? That is not in front of us, that is our rear!"

The most important communications between men are seldom made in words. Bolívar, casting covert looks at the sullen Páez, knew without more being said that the llanero would not follow him north. He knew with sickening disappointment that he could not pursue his great advantage. He was not sure of Santander, and alone he had nowhere near enough troops. Then he quickly made up his mind to let Páez have his way—for the time. He would not force a break. They must and they would fight again side by side.

"Your men do not wish to leave the llanos which they know as their own?" he asked Páez kindly.

Páez again gave him that look of childlike friendship.

"That is it! You have read my thoughts," he replied eagerly, for he had been torn by a conflict.

He knew that Bolívar was a great general, he

knew, too, that the advantage of their victory ought to be followed up. But he was not sure that his men would go north away from the country they knew so well, not even sure that he dared so to command them. Páez had expected a bitter quarrel with Bolívar. He was touched by his unexpected sympathy, his acute understanding.

Bolívar did not press him further, neither did he waste more words or wine

“Good-night, General,” he said

Bolívar sat all alone by the sputtering light of a candle. He saw a quick, almost an easy, victory, but that, he knew, was a dream. The reality he saw too, in all its bitterness

“I shall have to build the edifice of freedom, with broken tools and all alone,” he muttered.

He looked in that minute careworn, as he never permitted any to see him. Yet he did not look afraid or defeated. But Simón was not given to soliloquies or to solitude. He got up, looked in the bit of mirror, brushed his hair, and went out to join in the victory dance the llaneros were holding on the bare ground which surrounded the camp

Next day, in order to preserve the semblance of his command, he granted permission to Páez to withdraw. Soon afterwards there were other desertions, not formally sanctioned. In the end, only a few days after the great victory at Calabozo, he found himself with only that ragged army of old men and boys which he could call all his own. In prudence he ought to have retreated too—but he could not.

He found himself once more at San Mateo, his old hacienda. There his retainers, those slaves whom he had freed, kissed his hands and danced with joy. They had waited for him on the old place all through the Spanish occupation.

Bolívar occupied Maracay and La Victoria. At La Victoria he gave a great victory ball. Ladies in high combs and mantillas, with cerise flowers in their black hair danced the fandango almost until dawn. Not quite dawn for when it was still dark a sinister rumour flew around.

Bolívar commanded the call to arms to be sounded. At the clear call of the bugle his officers in their gala uniforms rallied their regiments, and the ladies surrounded now by their children and their servants, fled. In their elaborate ball dresses they vanished in to the night. For the news was that the Spanish were upon them. Two armies pinched the Liberator. La Torre had joined Morales and Morillo was closing in from another direction.

Bolívar, with that talent of his for keeping a cool head, was everywhere at once. Carefully and without haste he planned his strategy.

To his men he said "We fight now—not only for the country which we love, we fight for our lives."

After a long march begun almost in the ballroom, a march which was also a retreat—for Field Marshal Morillo was on the heels of the patriots—Bolívar made his stand.

At a little river, at a place called La Puerta, the tired army stood for six hours driving back the charges of Morillo's dragoons. Morillo himself was

wounded. He had retired from the field. It looked more like victory than like death. Bolívar's tired eyes lighted with triumph.

And then, in an evil moment, La Torre came up with a whole army—a fresh army. The weary patriots could do no more. The battle of La Puerta became a patriot defeat. One thousand of Bolívar's best men lay dead upon the field. General Urdaneta himself was wounded. Field Marshal Morillo added a title to his name; he became the Marquis de La Puerta. It was a recompense for his great victory.

Bolívar, surrounded by a few ragged guerrilla warriors, had been singing those traditional melodies, half Spanish, half Indian, which were dear to the tired hearts of his Venezuelan troops. Now they were asleep under their squares of rawhide, only the defeated commander remained awake. He had sent a scout to observe Morillo's movements, and now a slight breaking of leaves announced the scout's return. He was a young boy devoted with fanatical zeal to Simón, whom he all but worshipped. He told of wild gaiety, of Morillo, surrounded by the flower of his army, celebrating his victory at an officers' banquet.

"Sure, it might have been in Madrid itself," finished the boy.

"Only one who has never been to Madrid could say that," said Simón with a laugh in his low voice.

"I know that I shall never see those glories," said the boy humbly.

"They are not glories, do not call them so, for glory is a holy word," said Simón, suddenly serious.

"Nevertheless, your report of Morillo's banquet gives me an inspiration. I will be wild as he is tame. You shall see a new leader in the morning!"

The boy saluted and withdrew, before he went to sleep he racked his brains to know what the commander had meant, but in the morning he saw Bolívar, putting aside all military pomp, decided to be a simple llanero chieftain, if Páez would not follow whither he led he would himself lead the llaneros, for he was convinced that on the llanos in the great plains of Venezuela lay the key to the ultimate patriot victory. He took off the flowing cape which he had worn so long and so bravely, he took off his dragoon's helmet. He put on his head a cap of jaguar skin and in his hand he carried a short lance.

What is that black pennant waving from Simón's lance? It is a skull and crossbones and it bears the words "Liberty or Death"—about fifty years before Mr. Patrick Henry of Virginia had made those words roll through the capitol at Richmond, Virginia.

General Bolívar in his jaguar skin cap found himself once more wandering in the llanos with a band of a hundred-odd men. This was all that remained of the army which had so recently won the great victory at Calabozo. But Simón marched at the head of his ragged band holding on to the short lance with the words "Liberty or Death" written on its frayed pennant.

Most of the time he had many more troops than this small number, but at no time did he have enough to force a single victory.

"Twelve consecutive pitched battles, in which he has lost many of his best officers and troops, have not been enough to break his self-confidence or the tenacity with which he makes war upon us," reported Field Marshal Morillo to the King of Spain.

Bolívar in the field, waging constant guerrilla warfare, lived the wild llanero life; he seldom even changed his clothes. He slept on the ground and was almost always hungry. The white stallion shared his master's changed life. Once, acting like a watch dog, the horse awakened Bolívar barely in time to save him from some Spanish assassins who had crept up in the night.

Páez, hearing of these doings, said, "Bolívar does not care if he wins or loses, he only wants to fight."

But it was much more than this. At the back of it was another plan. The greatest plan of them all.

Strangely, in the face of defeats, in the full knowledge of the risk involved, his army grew. Bolívar even improved its equipment. In the terrible heat and choking dust his men lacked canteens. He had one American canteen to serve as a model. How to get more? He collected all the vessels in the countryside which were made of beaten brass, and a number of iron cages. Here was the metal. But now there was no solder. In one of the rude huts which Simón occupied he noticed that the nails were made of tin. Pull all the nails then and make solder! In the end the men had canteens. At a glance they looked like those made in the United States.

He experimented with the best type of saddle, with the best type of horseshoe. And in the midst of the

wild llanos he was always writing polished magazine articles. Many of them were published in the *Edinburgh Review*

The orderly who followed him carried a very long knife

"What is that for?" asked Simón

"To kill you, Excellency, if the Spaniards should capture you!"

The news from Angostura was not good. He saw that he must give up soldiering for a while and become once more the chief of state. With only forty men but with a new and splendid uniform, mounted on his beautiful horse, he entered his city again. There were the usual ceremonies and after them it was good to sleep once more in a bed.

A year and a month after Bolívar's first meeting with Páez in February 1819 a Congress convened at Angostura with Francisco Zera as President. Before this Congress Bolívar read his Constitution. This was one of the three great state papers which he wrote, the Manifesto of Cartagena and the Jamaica Letter being the other two. Only twenty-six representatives of the various provinces had arrived to hear him read it. But history was watching.

Bolívar's Constitution called for complete civil liberty and freedom of religion, it forbade slavery. The President who was to have the limited functions of a constitutional monarch was to be elected for life. There were to be two Houses: one popularly elected as are the Commons in England; the other originally selected by vote, was to be a permanent

Senate, a rough equivalent to the House of Lords. There was to be a Supreme Court of five members elected by Congress. There were, too, numerous laws not unlike the Code Napoleon, but all of them were suited to the peculiar conditions of South America.

At the end of his long address Bolívar said, "Gentlemen, begin your functions. I have concluded my own."

The Congress, such as it was, did indeed set to work. In the end, after nearly endless debate, they adopted the Constitution, but they struck out many of the provisions dearest to the Liberator's heart.

The defeated General, who had been fighting desultory guerrilla warfare on the hot plains of Venezuela, who had but a few months before slept at night under his square of rawhide in exactly the same way as his roughest recruit, was already enjoying a celebrity which was world-wide. Lord Byron named his yacht—the craft in which he sailed the Aegean in company with the dashing Cornishman Trelawny and with Shelley—the *Bolívar*. The news of Bolívar's historic fight for freedom, his high hopes of achieving it in the New World, and tales of his feats of bravery had literally reached round the world.

To a soldier who was half English and half Irish, coming home now to estates which he feared were ruined, Bolívar was a hope—almost the only hope in a world which lay pretty much in ruins about this young man who was only twenty-three years

old. But he was old in warfare, for James Rooke, like many another son of Ireland, had served in Wellington's army for nearly seven years. He knew no trade but soldiering.

Going through London on his way home, he had seen the posters which advertised, with such glowing promises of reward, for recruits to serve with General Bolívar in the War of Independence in South America. And now he was talking to his mother. She was weeping.

"You have seen how it is Jimmy! There is hardly a roof on this house any more. It is more than six months—when you sent me your last pay—since I have seen the colour of gold—or of silver either, for that matter. The servants are leaving me. And can I blame them?"

Jimmy had indeed seen the ruin of a once-prosperous manor house. The very fields no longer yielded grain for lack of manure and hands enough to work them, the house was in dreadful disrepair. And Jimmy was no farmer.

"With but a little cash I could retrieve all," his mother was saying.

"How much?" he asked her.

"Oh, for a matter of fifty pounds I could pay all the debts there are on the place, have enough left to hire help for another year, and by then—who knows?—times might improve."

Jimmy was silent for a minute. Was not that exactly the sum promised in the poster? Two hundred dollars in gold—that was what each volunteer going to join General Bolívar was to

receive when he reached America. Fifty pounds . . .

"Mother," he said, "I have been a soldier all my short life. It is with me as with almost all the army who fought on the Continent; we are out of work. Peace itself, blessed peace, has ruined us!"

And then he went on to tell her of the promises of untold riches which awaited him if he would volunteer for service in South America.

"But how could I bear to let you go? You have but just returned to me after seven years. When you went to the wars you were but a boy, and now you return to me as a man—and one of the most handsome men I have ever seen, though it is your own mother who says it! And now when we have not been together an hour you propose to leave me, to cross the ocean to the far Americas!"

Nevertheless, after a little while he was able to persuade her and in three days' time he found himself in the office of López Mendez, looking at maps and hearing of the wonders of the New World.

"General Bolívar has all but conquered Spain," said Señor Don López Mendez, who was all that young Rooke had imagined a Spanish grandee to be. "How little did we think in our youth, when General Bolívar and myself were sent by Venezuela to London, that he would accomplish the great work of liberating half a continent in so short a time!"

One of Señor Mendez' staff introduced young Rooke to some other members of the expedition. He was astonished at their magnificent uniforms. They were glittering with every accoutrement of war, the finest swords and a great display of medals.

Had these last all been come by in battle? He could not help being doubtful

British merchants were overstocked at this time with uniforms. They allowed Mendez to buy them on credit. One typical regiment, the First Venezuelan Hussars, wore uniforms of green, scarlet and gold. Their bottle-green jackets had scarlet collars and cuffs edged, for good measure, with gold lace. There were also gold epaulets and gold lace breeches. These uniforms were more than gaudy, they were of course, very hot.

Rooke could not well afford one of these splendid uniforms, but Señor Mendez kindly arranged that he should buy one under the promise to pay when he returned with the rich spoils of war from South America. Rooke was typical, he found of a large class of young men who were without resources in a changing world.

The period of change and unrest which began in Europe with the French Revolution and ended or began to end with the battle of Waterloo in 1815 had caused great personal suffering. In England and Ireland many estates had been ruined or confiscated, many younger sons had become professional soldiers. A great class had learned to live by war alone. To these peace itself brought ruin. Europe was not only flooded with useless munitions, it was crawling with useless men many of whom were still dressed in resplendent uniforms.

Mendez appealed to these men to enlist in the service of South American independence. Recruiting offices were opened in London and in Dublin

The appeals of Mendez fell on fertile ground, for many of the young soldiers were of that freedom-loving strain who from the dawn of recorded history have loved a good cause and a good fight. In fact, the volunteers came almost too fast. This gave the overcanny Scot, MacGregor, an idea. He had besides his mercenary interests a personal one, for he had married Bolívar's own niece.

MacGregor sold commissions in the "Expeditionary Force" for sums upwards of thirty pounds sterling. Besides, he appropriated to his own use the one thousand pounds which Mendez had lent him to further the recruiting.

He promised the volunteers everything. Especially he promised each man two hundred dollars upon his arrival in South America—that "tropical paradise." He told the young Anglo-Saxons that Spain was as good as defeated already, that they were getting themselves in for little more than the rewards which would follow victory.

So surprisingly successful were these efforts that no less than seven thousand volunteers finally enlisted for service over the seas in a land that no one they knew had ever seen. Some authorities say that there were eight thousand of these young men and not a few women who landed somewhere in the southern part of the American hemisphere. But this is an excessive figure, we know, for their number was at once reduced by tragedy. One of the first disasters which overtook these soldiers of fortune was that the ship *India* was struck by a gale off the coast of England and lost with all hands. The same gale

separated the other vessels and they landed at widely varying times and places in the West Indies

These volunteers were not all British, there were among them French, Italians, and even a regiment of Hanoverians. Also many evil characters had been attracted by the glowing tales of MacGregor and his colleagues. But all, the good and the bad, were splendidly attired

Mendez had not scrupled to employ a professional press agent. This gentleman had painted Venezuela in brilliant colours and embellished his picture with gold. After a long and tiring voyage—there were duels and even murders on some of the ships—hungry and sea weary, the volunteers landed on various West Indian islands. St Thomas St Kitts Trinidad and Granada. And on these islands there was no press agent

They were told that the great General Bolivar was no more than an Indian chief who practised the most horrid cruelties. That Venezuela itself was a land of lurking savages, where pestilence at once overcame white people, wherein there were no roads but the rivers, and those were choked with horrible alligators and great man-eating fish. In the jungles were myriads of deadly serpents, some of them a foot thick. There were scorpions, tarantulas, jaguars and also a nameless roving beast bigger than any of the others which were more commonly seen by men. This beast took many forms, it was the ghost of nameless fear

Provisions and money ran out, fever and small pox took their toll. Many men died and were buried

in their faded, sweat-stained uniforms. Blonde women breathed their last looking eastwards over the limitless ocean. All this time Bolívar was as unreal to them as the nameless beast of the legends.

Many sold their fine uniforms and deserted the regiments to which they had belonged. And yet some, by what chance it is hard to imagine, did actually find their way up the river Orinoco and into the city of Angostura. Others went at once to join Páez, at his station at San Fernando.

Páez soon discovered that these Irishmen could ride. It is a long way from the smooth green hills and muddy ditches of old Ireland to Venezuela, but a horse is a horse the world over. Páez staged mighty rodeos for his new friends. They all took turns at wild feats of riding and at throwing lances. The general himself always came off with the honours. None of the Irish could as yet throw a bull by knotting its tail, but that did not mean they did not like to watch while the llaneros performed this feat.

And then one Colonel Wilson played the traitor. He offered the whole English-Irish expedition—he did not say how little was left of it—to Páez. He whispered that there was no real use in consulting General Bolívar.

Meanwhile in Angostura some serious patriots, brave men and true, had come to join Bolívar. These members of the ill-fated expedition were dismayed but not discouraged by the unexpected hardships they had had to face. These had at least sifted away many bad characters.

In Angostura food was never too plentiful for the

armies which were quartered there, money for a long time had been almost non-existent. To supply the lack of specie Bolívar had minted plain silver pieces, called cut money. Now arrived the new men, hungry and ailing. Besides physical attention, each man expected two hundred dollars in cash!

When Colonel Hippisley who was in charge of the expedition, made known this requirement to Bolívar, he records that the general "bounced once or twice." Nevertheless Bolívar received them all with courtesy and managed to put heart back into them. Among those who came to Angostura, Bolívar especially noticed a red haired giant. He was Colonel James Rooke. With him he brought his fascinating young wife, whom he had married in St. Kitts.

Bolívar gave one of those great balls of which he was so fond. This was one to honour the American agent whom President Monroe had sent to Venezuela: Mr. Irvine. Bolívar always called him the American Ambassador. Enough of the splendid uniforms were still left to the foreign expedition so that they were able to make a brilliant show. The South Americans were not to be outdone.

It was at a banquet which was really a part of this ball—there was dancing both before and afterwards—that Bolívar made one of the most theatrical gestures of his life. The plan which had been simmering and seething within him, the reason back of all those guerrilla attacks on the llanos: the justification of his whole life broke into light.

Bolívar, brilliantly attired, sat at the end of the

long table The dinner was almost over. He made an impassioned speech, and then when his words had brought every one into a sort of hypnosis he jumped upon the table. It was covered with flowers, bottles, and glass. He seemed not to see them. He strode the length of the board.

"Thus, as I cross this table from one end to the other, I shall march from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Panama to Cape Horn, until no Spaniard remains!"

There was electric force in his words.

Then, while all eyes followed him, he turned and walked back over the table to his place.

"And thus I shall return without having done harm to a single soul save such as oppose my sacred mission."

First a moment of silence, then deafening cries of applause. No one knew just what he meant, yet there were many, and brave men among them, who felt a shiver go up and down their spines.



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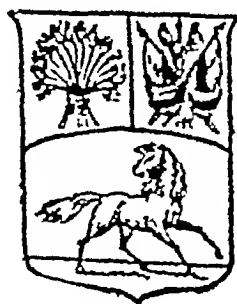
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XVII

THE WHITE INTERIO

THE PLAN which Bolívar announced to his banquet guests was fantastic, too fantastic to be believed. There were those among his elder supporters who regretted this show of, as it seemed to them, pure theatricalism. Sometimes the way to keep a secret is to announce it. Bolívar was very careful to say no more about his proposed conquest. He kept his visions to himself. Secretly, almost by stealth he prepared to leave Venezuela.

It was a very bad time for him to go. Maricao, who with a big show of penitence submitted himself and his army to the Liberator, had now been badly defeated in the north—had in fact practically lost his army. Bolívar went to see for himself at 1

found things even blacker than reports had painted them

"Who would not lose hope and even his head," Bolívar said bitterly on this occasion, "in the face of so many blunders? In addition to all the other woes which afflict us, I have to deal with incompetence, insubordination, and presumption!"

The British Legion was also no unmixed blessing. Some of the Anglo-Saxon volunteers had gone to the mouth of the Magdalena and some had landed at Margarita, where Arismendi fought a pitched battle with them. They then went on to Barcelona and its vicinity, where they got so very drunk and disorderly that they burned entire towns.

And then there was Páez. He had been severely defeated by the Spaniards and now came more news concerning the traitor Colonel Wilson. Simón saw that he must go two hundred miles up the river to San Fernando and see what was going on.

It was night when he approached San Fernando. The sound of guitars, native harps, and malaccas was accompanied by wild llanero yells. In the blazing light of a great fire he saw an orgy in full swing. This was a fiesta of Herculean dimensions. Seven oxen were roasting near the vast fire, there were several wild boars and all manner of pheasants, wild duck, and other fowl. Irishmen were dancing the unaccustomed raspon, one of the most typical of the llaneros' dances, while Páez himself and a group of his "guard of honour" were trying the sailors' hornpipe, coached by a profane and drunken son of the Emerald Isle.

But there was nothing in this to offend General Simón Bolívar. Out of the darkness he picked a partner, with perfect llanero form he held her through the furiously fast evolutions of "*La Maricola*," one of the llanero dances which is most like those ageless gypsy figures danced to-day behind the *Alhambra in Granada*. Around the couple a group of malacca players was joined by an inspired guitarist. Gradually some stray Irishmen came over to watch.

"Will yez look?" said an Irish voice. "Sure this one could dance the legs off a centipede."

The crowd of spectators grew. Soon even Páez got tired of his jig and joined the watching group. He looked, and then he looked again!

"It is the Commander in Chief!" he cried. There was a note of boyish pleasure in his voice. "Don't stop!" he called to the musicians.

Grasping the first girl who came handy, he joined the dance. There in the bright firelight two couples finished the intricate figures of "*La Maricola*."

Before they sank laughing and perspiring to the ground Bolívar knew that Páez was his friend.

"Come away from all this wild nonsense" said Páez, putting on dignity. "We will have a quiet bite at my house."

There Bolívar was astonished to see his General eat with a knife and fork. "The English have taught him many things," he reflected.

Páez told him all about Colonel Wilson—nothing which Bolívar did not already know to be sure—but it was an immense relief to him to find that Páez was

after all, loyal. Bolívar did not let Páez know that he knew how nearly the llancio chieftain had come to treason

Wilson was arrested. He was found to have been in the pay of the Spaniards, on the express mission of dividing the patriot chiefs

Back in Angostura, Bolívar was attacked by a dangerous and prostrating fever. His doctor said he must not move from his bed for at least two weeks, much better a month

While he was still in bed he made Colonel Jimmy Rooke commander in chief of the foreign forces, and he read the speech which Mr. Henry Clay had made months ago before the American Congress. Mr. Clay had stated that the cause of South American Independence was quite as worthy of the support of free men as was the cause of North American Independence. Then Simón Bolívar got out of bed, his temperature was even higher than it had been

On February 27, 1819, with thirteen thousand foot soldiers and eight thousand horse, with food and ammunition, General Bolívar headed westward, how far westward he intended to go none of his soldiers knew

This army was a patchwork of races, colours, and creeds even more startlingly contrasting than had been those other armies which Simón had drilled to victory in the past

To the rich Indian missions on the Cañon River, Bolívar had sent Colonel Rooke and a party of English on a recruiting mission. Now the regiments which had been formed in England were made up in large

part of almost naked Indians. These marched side by side with the English and the Irish, some of whom still retained their gaudy uniforms. And they marched well, keeping step to the inspiring music of the military bands. Bolívar soon saw that his new troops from Great Britain could drill men. Using them on this detail had kept them almost out of mischief while they were in Angostura. The Englishmen drilled the naked savages in the same manual of arms with which Bolívar had drilled the ex slaves—the one then used at West Point!

In the army, too, were many battalions of llaneros, and South Americans of all shades and colours. Only one thing united these troops—devotion to Bolívar. At this time even the generals who commanded them were loyal. The story of the test to which this loyalty was put is without doubt one of the greatest in military history.

With this army marched several hundred women. Not only in South America but in Europe it was the custom at that time to tolerate women camp followers. Besides the wives who would not leave their men, there was also a poor widow with her children who begged permission to follow the army back to her home in New Granada.

And so gaily at first heavily laden with munitions and followed by cattle on the hoof, this army set out from Angostura westward and then somewhat to the south.

Finally the army turned southwestward. On the river Arauca Bolívar fell in with a messenger from Santander. He had sent this general into New Gra-

nada to pave his own way. He was to tell the peoples beyond the Andes that Venezuela, having conquered Spain in her own territory, was now coming to deliver New Granada from the chains which bound her. He was to say that "before the sun had run its present course (before the year was out) there would be altars to liberty erected in the length and breadth of the land" Perhaps when Bolívar had sent Santander with this message he had thought that by the time he arrived it would indeed be true

However that might have been, this messenger now returned had good news for the Commander in Chief -Santander was coming to join him with a fresh army of New Granadans and the news was that his nation would welcome the Liberator as they had always welcomed him—with open arms

That night in a little thatched hut wherein were no chairs, and with the roof leaking from the tropical deluge which poured upon it, Bolívar at long last revealed his plans to his officers.

Standing bunched together like fowls in a rain-storm, they heard him in speechless astonishment. He proposed to continue westward over the plains which surrounded the Casanera River and then upward over the Andes to Bogotá! And victory!

But when he had finished speaking there was no burst of approval Only a heavy silence.

"Well, I for one will follow wherever you lead," spoke up Colonel Jimmy Rooke, "even if that be to Cape Horn itself!"

A little more persuasion and his officers agreed to his plan They knew, as we cannot know, of the

terrible road which lay before them. They knew of the rains and what they could do to a jungle which is to-day as wild as it was then. Even to-day a party of scientists armed and prepared with all that modern knowledge can offer would not dare to cross the savannas of the Casanare River after the rains had come. And this was merely the first part of the route—the easy part, if you like.

The officers were sworn to secrecy, it would not yet do for the men to be told where they were going.

Simón dismissed his officers. He was alone. He threw himself in his hammock, blew out the candle but he did not sleep. He saw all the horrors ahead but beyond them he saw another thing too—a vast country united in freedom.

For eight days the men, the horses and the mules followed the river. Then it was no longer wide enough for their boats. At this point, hearing that beyond the inundated plains lay mountains two llanero regiments deserted. Bolívar did not even try to restrain them.

The maize cakes which they had brought with them for food were now melted in the constant wet and the only food was beef—raw beef—for in this fish's life fires could not be built. And then there opened to their view something even wetter than the slimy river. These were the limitless plains of the Casanare River now a lake which spread about them for more than one hundred miles!

The banks of the streams which had overflowed to make this mighty lake through which no boat would

carry them were outlined by twisted vines and those long daggerlike thorns. Grey-blue herons dragged their legs as they flitted in flocks over the leaden, streaming sky. Animal life had fled except for the alligators, whose paradise the men of Bolívar's army were invading. In the water were caribes, those fish of which the British Legion had been told in the West Indies. They bit bare legs with the ferocity of sharks.

Day after day, exhausted beyond speech, the army went on. There were few who had shoes now. Clothing began to rot on their bodies. And in this lake were rivers, just as the Gulf Stream flows through the ocean. The current of these swollen submerged rivers was swift. In the water itself rafts had to be made to cross these streams, their course was marked by the jungle which ran in tangled rankness along their submerged banks. Many cattle, horses, and mules that had struggled through the jungle were swept away to drown in the current. And men grown utterly weary no longer fought the wetness which was become their element. We must remember that none knew where they were going, or why. They followed where a man they loved was leading them. They followed Simón Bolívar.

And then one day, when they had been three frightful weeks in the lake which the plains of Casanare had become, someone saw a triangle in the sky. What was that which cut the leaden heaven almost above them? There were many among those simple Indians who had never heard of the Andes. Terror worse than any which had gone before gripped them.

For now there were other spectral triangles as well, and they knew that these were mountains!

At a little Indian village called Tame they halted for three days. Here at least they did not sleep in water, for the village was on one of the lowest spurs of the Andes. Above them towered a giant's castle of snow-covered peaks. There at least there would be no rain.

It was at Tame that they fell in with Santander's army. He now commanded three thousand two hundred men. With him, too, were mules and a few horses of New Granada, inured to the mountains. The rumour got about in the Venezuelan army that they were going into the mountains, but others said that they were going only a little way.

Forward again. The llanero troops had lost many of their horses. On their spindly bowed legs they climbed painfully. Without their horses they were but half men. Bolívar promised them fine new animals, better than they had ever seen. Yet the hearts of the llaneros were torn, for in the five days' ascent from Tame to the pass at Paya all their remaining horses perished. There were now only a few mules and some pitiful cattle following the army of Bolívar.

At the pass of Paya were Spaniards. In a sudden surprise attack Santander destroyed this enemy force. There must be no men left to tell the tale of the oncoming patriots. Some prisoners they took with them.

Bolívar did not even dare to choose the most frequented of the mountain trails. To keep his advance

secret he chose the loneliest passes over the primeval Andes

And now, having passed that pass of Thermopylae, Paya, these men from the tropical lowlands saw the great barrier Andes rise before them in all its inhuman whiteness and horror. Sheer faces of rock were covered by glacial snows, on which a man might gain no footing and from which he might—and several did—plunge into the black depths almost a mile below him. The mountains were noisy with the thundering of mighty cataracts which plunged perpendicularly down their sides. There was thunder, lightning, freezing rain, and swirling snow. The wind moaned and chilled their bones.

The unknown Englishman who was one of Bolívar's followers on this march and who wrote *Campaigns and Voyages* says:

"In many parts the torrents that rage from rock to rock, almost perpendicularly beneath the narrow path, were so far below, that their roar was scarcely heard, and, as the wearied animals fell one by one, they could be traced in their descent by the crushing of shrubs, growing in the clefts of the fearful precipices, until they were seen to roll down the foaming stream."

The crossing of these terrifying torrents was done in two ways. At times the trunks of giant trees were laid across them, and men, not daring to look down, picked their way over. Sometimes when they were nearer to the mad rush of the streams, clinging to the underside of the trees, they crossed up to their necks in the icy water.

Bolívar, to every one's amazement, rode his horse—being one of the few which had come with Santander from New Granada—it was somewhat used to the mountains—across these log bridges carrying a sick man or a woman who was exhausted. He would sometimes make as many as seven of these crossings.

The other way to cross the streams was more frightening. Sometimes a torrent had cut two faces of rock so deeply that it could barely be seen far below. In this case a bridge was made of rawhide and the twisting fibrous stems of vines. On this a pulley was rigged. (In the same way by the same mechanism, a curtain is pulled back and forth.) In a straw basket like those one sees in pictures of old passenger balloons men and horses were pulled across these chasms! Why did they not drop into the abyss? Unfortunately many did. The feeble kicking animals would break the improvised balloon basket.

This army which he commanded had never felt cold—it was an unfamiliar torture. And they were almost naked before it—in the clammy mists and the white-toothed winds of the mountains. Their commander busied himself making rawhide garments for his soldiers. He was everywhere giving himself no rest. As a man struggled with bleeding hands to climb a precipice he would look beside him to see the Commander in Chief standing there.

"Courage, man! It won't be long so now and you have already done enough, endured enough to write your name for all time in the book of glory. Be

this march, you know, you will have ficed South America."

And the man, standing now on top of the particular precipice he had overcome, reaching down to a comrade to help him with the load of ammunition which, now that the mules were dead, had to be carried by the men, smiled. He felt proud of himself, he felt the greatness of his cause. He had hardly noticed that as the Liberator spoke he, too, had been climbing the precipice and that his hands were also bleeding.

The army had climbed nearly fifteen thousand feet. Now they were above the timber line. There was no longer a bit of wood for a fire. Could one have been kindled, the roaring wind would have blown it out. In the brief pale sun of noon the men lay prone, taking in through their skins the faint warmth. The air was thin and their ears beat with the altitude as their tired hearts raced. In the sharp hail or sudden blinding snow they felt strangely tired. It would have been a sweet contentment to die . . .

And then there was the voice again close beside the ear of the man who had sunk to the ground.

"Soldier, arise! Below us there is a warm green valley decorated with bright flowers. A land wherein there are many horses. We have now only to go down into that valley and we shall have conquered South America! It is not far now and the road descends into warmth and plenty."

And there was another, too, who never lost heart or was even at all discouraged.

This was Colonel Jimmy Rooke, that flower of the

Anglo-Saxon race In the wet lake which covered the savannas of the Casanare, he would laugh and say how glad he was of the fine cool rain, and to get his fill of swimming at last

In the heights he would say, "Well, at least here we're not bothered by devilish damp alligators, those fellows had their mouths wide open for me the whole time. It was white meat they were after, I'm thinking "

Big and white-skinned, with his red hair and beard hanging in long tangled curls, he could make a dying man laugh with his imperfect Spanish. And somehow as an Anglo-Saxon he roused the pride of race in the Creoles and the Indians They could do what he could do! But they could not match his gaiety With Colonel Jimmy Rooke everything was always all right in the best of possible worlds.

Bolívar always called him "Jimmy," a cross between the Spanish form of James, which is *Jaime* (the J a heavily aspirated H) and the English diminutive

But now they were come to the highest peak of all the top of their world the *Páramo de Prisca*.

There was, as before no fuel for fires, even if there had been the wind would have put them out The men and the women sat close together for warmth

Towards dawn a soldier crept up to Simón.

"The poor widow and her children—you remember the one who asked to go with the army back to her home in New Granada?"

"I remember her," said Simón. "What has happened?"

The man lowered his voice, he could hardly be heard for the moaning of the wind

"She is frozen to death," he whispered, "herself and all of her children!"

Simón bowed his head in prayer.

But a few minutes later he was helping Rooke make a crude tent for another woman and her newborn baby.

To the woman Bolívar said, "Your little son is a symbol of the new day which has dawned in America!"

Next day the mother with the babe in her arms marched with the army





XVIII

COLONEL JAMES ROOKE

BOLIVAR HAD crossed the Andes. At Tame that village on the lowest Andean spur of the Venezuelan side, he had had three thousand two hundred men. Now there were twelve hundred skeletons who looked as if they had been crucified. But they were climbing downward! Colonel Rooke was still in the rear with some detachments.

The sun came out and through the brilliant mist they saw a valley—green, as green as an emerald. They were at last really walking in the valley which was decorated with flowers, but the army looked like the dead who had just arrived in Paradise.

Indeed the peasants from the village in New Granada thought they were not mortal men. They crossed themselves at seeing these apparitions come

as if out of the earth, and ran away. Bolívar called a few of his ragged scouts to him.

"Cut your hair and wash in the clear waters of that near-by stream. Set your rags in the best order you can. Then go into the villages and proclaim that an army of liberators has come to deliver New Granada!"

In the village of Socha, in the verdant flowering valley of the Sagamosa, Bolívar halted and set up a kind of headquarters. He was awaiting the arrival of the gallant Rooke, who had charge of the stragglers who had been unable to keep up with the main army. Also Bolívar had no up-to-date information of the state of affairs in New Granada. He did not know how large an army he would have to face. Looking at the pathetic remnant of his men sleeping, most of them, in the sun, he felt for a moment uncertain. These men smiled like children as they slept the sleep of exhaustion. But the warm sun was falling on their unconscious bodies, and he knew that that sun would warm their hearts.

Then the news he had been awaiting arrived. A young and gallant Spanish general, Barreira, was in command of three thousand of the finest troops which had ever been sent from Spain. Veterans of the Napoleonic wars. And this general now knew of Bolívar's presence. He was awaiting in the passes of the mountains to cut him off from Bogotá.

They had been in the village of Socha only a day. His men awoke to eat and then went to sleep once more. Bolívar called General Lara to him.

"Lara," he said; "you see how it is. We have lost

too many men. From a military standpoint it is almost as serious that we have lost all our horses. In this march six mounts have perished under me alone—and I am not the heaviest man in this army! Our Venezuelan llaneros are no good on their feet. They cannot walk on those crooked legs, which are only meant to curl under the belly of a horse. Take a few of the best-dressed men and go out and recruit. Beg horses as you beg for men.

"Tell the people that we have crossed the Andes with the blessing of God, that America might be free, the South as well as the North. They give their men and their horses in a holy cause. They give them for their country and for the freedom of mankind."

Lara saluted and departed.

Even before the Commander in Chief expected him, Lara returned laden with food—and with eight hundred new recruits! Besides, he had more than a thousand horses. The llaneros slept no more now, they were busy training their new mounts in the sunlight and also in the bright moonlight. The army, fed, rested, and warmed, came back to vigour. The men's hearts were braver for the terrors they had passed, and the few women who had come from the other side of those mighty white mountains laughed in the sparkling sunlight.

But they stayed at Socha only three days. On the tenth of July, 1819, they were on the march once more. It had been barely four months since Bolívar had left Angostura. In his heart he already knew that he had accomplished one of the greatest feats in

military history. He could no longer even seriously regard the great obstacles ahead. If he had crossed the Andes with that army he could, he knew, do anything. His mood of elation rode with him; he could not shake it off. It clung persistently, just as at Jamaica, not so long ago, despair had clung persistently.

A fire was lighted behind his bright eyes.

The Spanish general Barreira was young and very good-looking. He was also vigorous, at once he determined to take the offensive. He had heard tales of the condition of the Liberator's army. He would strike now and strike hard, with his full force. That was good generalship.

Bolívar must fight a battle. Right away, before he could rest his troops or even before he could drill those New Granadans who had but yesterday joined his ranks. Here was a battle to be fought and on it hung his immortal soul. If he did not win this fight his whole life would be far worse than wasted. The many patriot dead would have died in vain. Not only those new-made ghosts, those frozen souls whose voices whistled in the winds which swept over the snowy crags of the Andes, but all those others who through the years had given their lives that Great Colombia might be born. He had been fighting since 1810—nine years. Ten thousand dead men cried to him to win. In this battle he must risk South America itself in a single spin of the wheel of fate. But Bolívar knew that it would not be chance alone. Victories are made by men!

Barreira had crossed a river and occupied a strong

position Bolívar in the early morning, starting before light, made a forced march and with Santander and Anzoátegui drove the Spaniard back over the river, but Barreira's position was still good, for he had taken possession of a commanding hill. For a week they fought. Each day Bolívar feared the arrival of Spanish reinforcements from Bogotá. There were attacks and counter attacks, no decisions.

On the seventh day Bolívar found himself in a bad position under a hill commanded by the enemy, his back to a swamp. He ordered Santander to occupy at all costs a rocky hill directly in front. Santander tried and failed.

The patriot army was literally in a hole. All around them they could see the war horses of the enemy cavalry charging in a circle, the brilliant battle flags carried on lances cutting the horizon. It was as if on those heights above them the enemy was riding in a sort of circus ring, firing volley after volley at the patriot troops penned in the pit below.

Bolívar commanded the British Legion to attack. Up the hill. With incredible bravery they charged, keeping in ranks, heedless of the fire which poured down on them. In the exact formation used by the British at another place Bunker Hill. O'Leary—the man who was the Liberator's faithful friend through life and to whom we owe so much that we know about Simón Bolívar—fell, severely wounded. And then, while in the act of leading a charge, Colonel James Rooke fell. Mackintosh took command, rallied the English and the Irish who were beginning to feel the terrible punishment, and

charged again up the hill. Once more they fell back, and then with bayonets fixed they again charged upward into the devastating fire. And this time they drove the Spanish before them!

But Bolívar turned his glass another way. Almost at the minute that the British Legion had taken the heights the thing he had feared all week occurred. Fresh reinforcements had arrived and were attacking Soublette's division in the rear.

Bolívar turned to Colonel Rondon, who was in command of a llanero regiment.

"Colonel," he said, "save your country!"

The Spanish were attacking Soublette by a narrow pass. Their position seemed invincible. They were so closely crowded together that it was like driving a cork back into a bottle to force them to retreat. The glass of the Commander in Chief was stuck to his eye. He saw the famous llanero charge, that movement which seemed timed to the wind itself; saw the familiar lances fixed in position.

"Once more," he prayed, "only one more llanero charge! God send them victory!"

Then there was only confusion, the sounds of thick cries, he could not see more than a *mêlée* of men and horses. And then—nothing. The pass was suddenly clear. At once Bolívar threw in his infantry. They were able to attack the disorganised Spaniards by both flanks. The battle was his.

Darkness fell. Heavy torrential rain; it was as if the cannon had opened the skies. In the cover of darkness some of the Spaniards fled. On the hills and in the passes many lay dying—many patriots,

more Spanish. One of the wounded made no cry

In a rude tent lay the redheaded giant Colonel James Rooke. Doctor Foley, never forgetting to talk soothingly in his pleasant Irish voice, was giving short commands. He was performing an operation. It was before the day of anesthetics. All Colonel Rooke had had was a stiff drink. The faces of those who watched were white. Their necks turned as the doctor turned, their eyes followed his hands. One seasoned soldier left the tent, he was too sick to stay and see more.

Then at last, "All done, my brave boy!" said the doctor.

"Well, then, show it to me," said Rooke, his voice still a little gay.

"Show what?" asked the doctor.

"The arm, man. You know well what I mean."

Then, holding with his remaining arm the amputated member he said, "Wasn't it truly a beauty? Did you ever see a finer, stronger arm, Doctor?"

"It's not at all bad," said Doctor Foley, "but I've cut off better ones."

"There you are lying to me! You never saw a better arm," laughed Rooke, and he made the arm wave and cried, though now his voice was weakening. "Viva la patria!"

"And which country do you mean by that?" asked the doctor. "You are half Irish and half English, and you've fought for both countries in your time."

Rooke, suddenly serious, looked at him. He dropped the severed arm. He spoke gently.

"I mean," he said, "the one I am dying for!"

In another tent a man was writing. It was Simón Bolívar, who was keeping a man waiting—a man who was to cross the Andes alone to take a letter to a very pretty young lady in Angostura, Mrs. James Rooke. While he wrote, the tears fell.

And later, when all that he had hoped from his campaign had come to pass, Bolívar said in his first public speech, "To Rooke I owe all my good fortune in New Granada, and Venezuela is indebted to him for the preservation of its President and will in times to come attribute her liberty mainly to Rooke."

The day after the soldier had departed for Angostura with the letter, Colonel James Rooke lay dead.

Bolívar and his staff were having a light lunch.

"It is evident that Barreira is on his way back to Bogotá. Or at least that he thinks he is. But we shall teach him better," said the Commander in Chief.

It was on the bridge of Boyacá that the action was fought which, coming as it did at the end of the sixty-five fateful days since Bolívar had left Mentecal in Venezuela, caused the French military writer Mitre to say that on the day of this battle Bolívar "made sure of his immortality and decided the fate of America."

At Boyacá, Bolívar took not only the young Spanish general prisoner—Barreira gave himself up to a private of Colonel Rooke's old regiment, the "Rifles"—but also his second in command, thirty-nine officers, and sixteen hundred soldiers. Also a

vast amount of ammunition and many horses were turned over. This was a glorious victory. The patriots had lost only thirteen killed and fifty two wounded.

Bolívar had one of the Spanish prisoners shot at once. It was that Captain Vinoni who had treacherously betrayed the fortress at Puerto Cabello seven long years before.

The battle was over. Bolívar was too good a soldier to minimise danger and now he was realistic in his view of his success. It had come at last. He mounted his horse and rode, dressed as a common soldier, back into the solitude which was South America. He wanted to be alone with the continent itself. He bowed low to the peasant women whom he passed. They were clad in a peculiar shade of blue woollen, seen only in the province of Tunja. But soon, leaving the villages behind, he was alone in the wilderness watching the snowy heron "marching like a grenadier, in grave and regular cadence, slowly lifting its long leg, distending and planting it deliberately, looking to the right and to the left the while, as if dressing by guide on the flank of a platoon".*

Those peaks of the Andes seen from this distance appeared no more than so many stacks of grain. So do difficulties overcome seem insignificant in retrospect. This was, he knew, the moment of conquest, and yet he was almost overcome by weariness. He was suddenly so tired that life itself seemed too great an effort. Also a strange fear now gripped his heart.

* *A Visit to Colombia, in the Years 1822 and 1823* by Colonel Duran of Philadelphia.

"I fear peace more than war," he muttered

Then, sinking to the ground and covering himself with his military cape, he slept.

Next day his mood had utterly changed. He was all gaiety, singing those French military songs of his, appearing everywhere at once, giving careful commands. Leaving the army to bring up the prisoners and the spoils of war, and taking three picked squadrons of cavalry with him, he set out for Santa Fé de Bogotá. Joan of Arc never made a more triumphal progress

Everywhere there were arches of roses; flowers strewed his way. He saw the picturesque old Spanish city with the two eerie churches perched so high in the mountains above it

He looked and said to himself, "My city "

As he rode in the midst of vivas and olés a woman came up and, kneeling, clutched his foot in the stirrup.

"You are not real!" she cried "You are a vision."

He dismounted and raised her up

"I am real enough to give you a kiss," he said

And then, in the midst of that cheering multitude, something happened—something which was to change his life forever: in a fateful moment a girl with green eyes threw him a red rose!

Somehow in the midst of all the tumult he had seen her face and he caught the rose and put it between his teeth. He was dressed in a black dress coat and spotless white trousers, which were very tight-fitting in the fashion of the day. He wore Wellington boots and a helmet covered with rawhide. This

helmet he now removed as he bowed to the lady of the red, red rose.

The lady's name was Mrs. Thorne. She was the wife of an English doctor, a staid and respectable man who adored her. But she had been born Manuela Sáenz and she had spent her girlhood in Lima, Peru. It was still to be a little while before Bolívar knew how she could dance, how she could ride. To-day she was only one of a multitude gone mad.

Someone proffered him a wreath of golden laurel leaves, but he laughed and would not put it on.

"That," he said, "is for General Santander or for General Anzoátegui."

But Anzoátegui, who was riding behind, looked like a dead man, he had caught a fever in the Andes from which he had not recovered. With Bolívar, too, were the sad remnants of the British Legion. Looking at them, so few now and these few all skin and bones, he thought of the cost of this brief day of triumph.

Now they were threading their way through the narrow medieval streets, through the crowds which choked them, they were approaching the ancient Spanish Palace of the Viceroys. On the steps Bolívar dismounted. He was a lithe figure, privation agreed with him, and in his face was the eagerness and force, the will to conquer, which had made this day. He greeted all his old friends by name. Reverently he asked about Camilo Torres and all those other patriots whom the Spanish had put to death. He remembered that Torres had said to him when he

was in despair on the island of Jamaica, "Your country cannot die, General Bolívar, while you live"

"My joy would be complete if only President Torres was here to share it with us," he said to the gentlemen of New Granada.

But it was not a day on which to indulge sad thoughts.

"Only three days ago," the Alcalde (Mayor) was saying, "we were all invited to a grand ball to be given here in the Palace to celebrate the supposed royalist victories. I myself did not see fit to attend, but I am told that it was a grand affair. In the middle of it someone noticed that the Viceroy was gone!" Then the old man lowered his voice. "Sálamo left something behind! You will find half a million pesos in the Royal Treasury."

"That is really good news," said Bolívar frankly. "My men have crossed the Andes; they have endured all, everything, but they have never had a payday since they joined."

Bolívar used the money which he found in the Royal Treasury to good advantage. All the soldiers were well paid as he had promised them they would be, on those frigid nights on the high Andes. He also arranged pensions for the widows of the patriots who had been put to death by the Spaniards. He gave no thought to himself. Simón Bolívar was never known to reward himself, or to be anything but generous to a fault.

On the steps of the Palace he made a short speech which paved the way for that Great Colombia which he now knew in his heart he had achieved.

"Just as your great President, Camilo Torres, came to the aid of your sister republic Venezuela, so now has Venezuela come to your aid. She has done no more than pay her just debt "

He was working, as he had always worked, to cement a union between the two states. For he knew that Venezuela needed New Granada at the moment even more than New Granada had needed Simón Bolívar. New Granada was still a rich and almost unspoiled state. She had not felt the terrible ravages of war as had Venezuela. Here there had been no Bores to burn and destroy. True, her strongest men had been put to death, but the country itself was still rich in every resource needed for war and rich also in man power.

Somehow, in spite of the balls which lasted all night, the endless dinners, and the endless toasts and speechifying he managed to write a full report for Vice-President Zea in Angostura, telling of all that had befallen. The report is so long that it takes more than two days to read it.

As he wrote he had no idea that once more in Angostura that game which South Americans delight to play was already in full swing. He did not know political intrigue had already almost swept away the fabric of government which he had produced with so much thought and with so many battles. The South Americans have a name for this sort of thing. They call it "flamingo croquet."



XIX

GREAT COLOMBIA

IN A SUMPTUOUS Spanish room in the Viceregal Palace in Bogotá, a room draped with Venetian brocade of a deep rose colour, a council of state had just been concluded. Bolívar sat sprawled behind a great carved table, black with age. Beside him, pad in hand, sat General O'Leary. They were, at last, alone.

"Sire," said the Irishman, "you must take some rest. This business of government is more arduous than battles themselves."

"You think of me as a man, O'Leary. You are my friend, you know that I feel heat and cold and love and hate like other men. Sometimes I think you are the only man in South America who does."

O'Leary watched him quietly while the Liberator bit the end of the long quill pen he was holding. A pen used only for the great man's signature. He dictated everything he wrote now. There were so many letters to write to so many governments, so many state papers to prepare, that conversation had become a rarity between Bolívar and his Secretary General. Simón had been substituting dictation for conversation. Only so could he get through the pressure of work. He dictated while he dressed and undressed, while he ate, even sometimes while he rode he would suddenly rein in his horse and O'Leary would pull out his notebook writing with difficulty as his mount walked, keeping pace with the Liberator's horse.

"When I am in the field," Bolívar ruminated, "I always think of winning wars and I always think that when they are won there will be a golden time of peace. Peace and prosperity. The kind of picture one sees drawn in the cartouche of an old map or in a mural painting. Again and again I have to remind myself that peace is the real war!"

"It is in the peace that we must fight to the death. It is in peace that evil passions arise. It is in peace that selfish men would sell their country for a few pieces of silver. I have seen the same men who would assassinate me in peace perform deeds of incredible valour by my side in battle. In battle these same men would die that I might live."

Softly the Irishman spoke in his perfect Castilian "Perhaps, sire, you are thinking, as I am, of General Santander?"

"Yes. I was Santander is to me what women are said to be I cannot live with him and I cannot live without him. Santander is the only man in my staff who is competent for civil government He has a legal mind He knows how to rule men He also knows how to ruin his enemies If I had appointed any man but Santander Vice-President of our new government, something tells me that that man would not have lived happily or long in office Yet I well know that such a man ought not to have unlimited power However, he is, I feel sure, loyal to me personally . . . now "

To this O'Leary did not reply

In this overbusy life of his it was sometimes necessary to get away from every one, or almost every one. One day he lay sunning in his hammock Care was far away, in intervals of dictating to O'Leary he would hum gay French military songs As the warm sun toasted his skin he smiled faintly, sweetly, at peace in the heat which was his native element. He lay like a lizard in the sun

O'Leary jumped up; someone was without. An officer in the full formal regalia of the Colombian navy was saluting before him. He was an Englishman whom Bolívar had never met Bolívar had not been expecting visitors.

"Sire, I have dispatches for you from Angostura," he said

"You have just come from there yourself?" asked Simón.

"It has taken me almost two months to cross the Andes," said the officer

"How did you leave things in Angostura?"

"Bad," said the officer, "very bad."

Partly from the dispatches and partly from the naval officer Bolívar learned the truth. The game of "flamingo croquet" again. This time it had all but destroyed the Angostura government.

The mild New Granadan, Vice-President Zea, had not been able to hold matters in his own hands. It was the old, old story. Even the same characters assuming their accustomed villainous parts. Both Arismendi, from his island of Margarita, and Mariño had revolted first against General Urdaneta and then against the Angostura government, that was to say against the Liberator himself. It was felt that Bolívar had deserted his native country!

"Is this openly said of me?" Bolívar asked his informant.

"Sire, you have been formally accused before the Congress of Angostura of desertion! It has been formally charged that you went into New Granada without permission."

For just a moment Bolívar's dark eyes were cruel and intense, like the eyes of an eagle who has sighted prey. He said nothing.

The naval officer went on with his story. General Urdaneta had arrested Arismendi and put him in a cell in Angostura, but this cell had at once become the open place of meeting for the rebels. Before long Arismendi had broken out of it, marched on the President's house, assumed power, and appointed Mariño his chief of staff!

Bolívar called an orderly

"My compliments to Vice-President Santander, and will he attend me at once?"

To the naval officer, he said, "You must be tired, sir; I have myself crossed the Andes. My orderly will see that you have every comfort."

Santander could not have been far away, for he appeared almost at once. Bolívar, as he told him briefly of the events in Venezuela, had a feeling that he had already known of them.

"Santander," Bolívar finished, "before it is light in the morning I shall be on my way to Angostura. You will be in supreme command here. I recommend to your care all the Spanish prisoners. As you know, I have written to Sálamo to arrange for their exchange and have had as yet no answer. Especially look after young Baireira. He is a brave lad, and since he came from Spain he cannot be altogether blamed for espousing the cause of his country. He is not like those other renegades you and I have dealt with."

"In all that I do," replied Santander, "I shall have only one guide. As each affair comes before me I shall ask myself, 'In what manner would the Liberator himself have handled this matter?'"

"Don't be so formal, Santander. Have we not slept side by side in the cold páramos of the Andes? All I ask of you, comrade-in-arms, is that you will act as my friend. And as the friend of your country."

Back again over the Andes, as fast as the strength of brave horses, changed at each village, and patient mules would allow. Over those perilous bridges of rawhide pulleys, into the chasms, and up over the

snowy peaks And then Bolívar was at last floating downstream on the Domingo River, the first of that system of waterways which would in the end carry him into the great Orinoco itself He was in a flechera, decorated with pennants.

At Barinas he saw another flechera, similarly decorated with the insignia of a patriot general What did this signify?

With spyglass to his eye, Bolívar looked again at the brilliant pennants which fluttered against the jungle green of the tangled growth along the river's edge.

"Invite that general on board, whoever he may be," Bolívar commanded.

Standing in a small boat which was being rowed toward the flechera of the Liberator was a man who might have been Bolívar's brother—or his son It was as if Simón saw his own image there by some reflective magic of the smooth flowing waters of the tropical river

Arrived on board Bolívar's craft, the young general knelt and kissed the Liberator's hand. Hastily Bolívar bade him get up Then, by what instinct he knew not he kissed him on both cheeks. It was his first meeting with José Antonio Sucre, who was to be known as the "White Knight," the young warrior of spotless honour

Briefly Sucre sketched his career He had been one of Mariño's generals and then when Mariño had formed his own government in defiance of the Liberator's he had refused to be party to it. During the Liberator's recent absence from Venezuela he had

been effective in checking Morales and Morillo. It was Zea who had named him general.

"But, sire, I am a general only by your will. I would gladly be a private in your army."

Bolívar confirmed the appointment, since the young man seemed to wish him to do so personally, and the two flecheras drew apart. Thus began a relationship which was to be as nearly perfect as any the lonely Simón Bolívar was ever to know. He had met a man in whom he could place implicit trust, "the son whom Providence has sent me in recompense for leaving me childless."

Arismendi was standing on one of the bright green balconies of Government House in Angostura. He saw a figure dressed in a cape followed by an escort of honour. "It cannot be . . ." Then he saw it was!

In another moment he was greeting Simón Bolívar as if he, Arismendi, were his most loyal supporter. Bolívar on his part gave no sign that he had the least suspicion that anything was amiss.

In fact, nothing was. Before the might of his presence the storm clouds rolled up and passed away, leaving serene skies. He appeared before Congress, stated his record, and invited criticism. There was none. Instead, a great burst of heartfelt acclaim.

Arismendi arranged one of those vast balls in honour of the returning conqueror. Maíño took his accustomed attitude of complete repentance. Arismendi, in spite of his disloyalty, was a capable man. He had retained the cabinet which Bolívar had selected before he had left, and had governed well.

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In fact, only a few days after his arrival, which he had fully expected to be in the midst of bitter civil war, Bolívar was able to realise the great dream of his life. For on December seventeenth Congress met and formally passed the "Fundamental Law of the Republic of Colombia."

Great Colombia was a reality at last

For this law made a single state of the former Captain Generalcy of Venezuela and the former Viceroyalty of New Granada, it also included the province of Quito (Ecuador), a part of the Spanish Viceroyalty Bolívar had not as yet had time to conquer the last mentioned province, which was still in the hands of Spain. No one, however, doubted that this detail would soon be arranged!

It was only twelve days since he had arrived in Angostura. Not only had he accomplished the actuality of Great Colombia, he had been elected President of the new union, with Santander as Vice-President in supreme command of the former New Granada. The first Congress was to meet the following year at Cucuta, approximately midway between Bogotá and Angostura. Thus for the third time in one year Bolívar crossed the Andes.

Again in New Granada, Bolívar was received with more acclaim than had greeted him after the battle of Boyacá. He was asked to a banquet by the Franciscan monks, who had in the past been good

royalists This is a translation of the salutation which prefaced the invitation.

“To the Supreme, the Incomparable Hero, the Terror of Iberia, and the Glory of his Country, to the Peerless Warrior, the Scourge of Tyrants, the Protector of Mankind; to the Genius of Independence, serene in adversity, modest in triumph; the Ever-great Simón Bolívar, Liberator, President, and General of the Army and of the Republic of Colombia ”

Strange to record, Simón did not accept the monks' invitation!

Slowly the news that Great Colombia had been proclaimed a sovereign state, free and independent, was sailed over slow-breaking waves to Spain. Small, restless, and irritable, King Ferdinand read the dispatches of his Field Marshal Morillo, whom he had sent to conquer the whole continent of South America in one hundred and sixty days. It was now five years since Morillo had landed in Venezuela with ten thousand picked troops; he was still fighting in that one province—and had lost most of it.

Did King Ferdinand remember the appearance of the Creole youth who had worsted him so saucily at darts one day long ago while Maria Louisa looked on? He read in Morillo's dispatch

“Nothing can compare with the untiring activity of that leader. His fearlessness and his talents entitle him to his place at the head of the revolution and of the war; but he possesses as well, from his noble Spanish blood and his education, also Spanish, qualities of elegance and generosity which elevate

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him far above all who surround him. He is the revolution."

These were words, both touching and true, which any man might be proud to have said of him by his mortal enemy. That Morillo dared to write such generous praise to his king and commander speaks eloquently of Bolívar and eloquently of the Field Marshal also. These words did not, however, please the King.

"Bolívar," wrote Morillo, "is an indomitable soul whom only a single victory of the smallest nature will make master of five hundred leagues of territory."

Nor were these victories just reported of the "smallest nature." The anger of the King set him to prepare an end to all this. He would send such an expedition to South America as should forever decide who was to be the victor in this conquest, a Creole or the King of Holy Spain. Accordingly he raised an army of twenty four thousand men and set about equipping them with all the necessary material of war. Great transports were made ready in the port of Cádiz.

The trade winds blowing westward over the ocean brought this news to South America, then the news crossed the Andes and reached Simón Bolívar. He had been tirelessly busy, and generous to a fault in his victory. When his salary was paid to him, he gave it away to the families of those soldiers who had died in battle, and—even perhaps rarer in so occupied a man—he found time to write a letter to each bereaved mother.

He was preparing at this time for his next move, south to Quito. Also he was in constant touch with all his generals on both sides of the Andes. Everywhere he made speeches which were intended to cement the bonds of union between New Granada and Venezuela, he sought everywhere to arouse allegiance to the new and greater state, Colombia.

All this time he never in any way sought personal reward. His officers relate that he seldom had a peso in his pocket, that when he needed a little change he was forced to borrow from them. And yet when his salaries were due, twenty-five thousand pesos as Commander in Chief of the army and fifty thousand pesos as President of Colombia, he asked that they be distributed to the soldiers who had so faithfully followed him.

Meanwhile Morillo had set up headquarters in a village on the former boundary line between New Granada and Venezuela, and Bolívar, in order to watch him, made his headquarters at Trujillo. A packet arrived for the Spanish general from his king. "Here," he thought, "are the dispatches which will announce the arrival of twenty-four thousand troops, with whom I may end this long-drawn-out war." But they contained quite other news. Reading them and the other letters which came with them he pieced out what had happened.

King Ferdinand was hated by many of his subjects. He had re-established the Inquisition. He had abolished the Cortes of Cádiz, a sort of parliament. One Rafael Riego had headed a revolution, which the King with difficulty suppressed. Nevertheless,

it had been sufficient to completely prevent him from sending troops overseas. They had been most urgently needed in Cádiz. Therefore, the commands which the disappointed Morillo read were to sue for an armistice with the rebels!

Morillo hoped that the news of the real state of affairs had not yet reached Bolívar. He determined to act with all dignity. Nevertheless, he addressed Bolívar as "His Excellency the President of the Republic," and he sent one of his trusted officers with his communication.

Bolívar, not to be outdone in civility, asked this officer to lunch with him. The Liberator as host showed that mixture of Jeffersonian republican dignity and that formal Spanish courtliness which usually humbled the proudest spirits. Nevertheless, the luncheon was not a social success. For before the dessert had been cleared from the table the Spanish officer had clearly intimated that before terms of an armistice could be discussed his chief would require that General Bolívar retire to Cucuta.

Bolívar rose gracefully from his seat, he held the back of his chair with one hand while he allowed a silence to fall. He waited until that silence had deepened.

The breathing of the visiting Spaniard could almost be heard when General Bolívar said, "Say, sir, to General Morillo that he will retire to his position around Cádiz in Spain before I retire to Cucuta! Remind him also that when I was a fugitive from my country, and when meanwhile he had established himself at the head of a great army, and at a

time when he was surfeited with triumphs—that at that time I, accompanied by only a few poor conscripts, was not afraid to seek him out. Remind him also, if you will be so obliging, that when later I had under my command only a few undisciplined guerrilla troops I disputed the terrain with him foot by foot. Even at that time, as your general has reason to know, I would never have listened to such a proposition. A proposition which he has the temerity to make to me to-day when I have an army much greater and much better disciplined than his own! Tell him, sir, that I return his proposal with contempt.”





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VENEZUELA LIBERATED

FIELD MARSHAL DON PABLO MORILLO was a self-made man. His parents had been poor peasants, but he had elevated himself to become a Field Marshal of Spain and he had defeated Napoleon in battle. Nevertheless, as sometimes happens with self-made men, he had an admiration for aristocracy. During his campaign in Venezuela he had come to have a vast respect for Simón Bolívar as a general, and as a Spaniard he respected the blue Castilian blood which flowed in the veins of the patriot general.

In spite of an inauspicious beginning Morillo was able to arrange a personal meeting with his respected adversary. When the meeting, which lasted nearly two days, was ended he parted with a beloved enemy.

The little town of Santa Ana, halfway between

the two opposing camps, was selected as a common ground of meeting. Morillo prepared himself as for a parade in Madrid, a parade to be reviewed by his king. He wore his most formal and gorgeous uniform, one that had not been unpacked since he had landed in the hot wilderness which had been for him the scene of few victories and of many defeats. He pinned his many decorations to his chest and he took with him a guard of hussars in full regalia.

Bolívar had sent O'Leary ahead to meet the Marshal and to present his compliments to him.

"How much of a guard will accompany General Bolívar?" asked Morillo.

"None at all, sir," replied O'Leary. "The Commander in Chief will be accompanied by only a few members of his staff."

"He has already outdone me in generosity," said Morillo, and he gave orders to his hussars to retire.

Then on a hill not far away he saw a group of patriots.

"Point out to me General Bolívar," he asked O'Leary with evident curiosity.

"What, that little man on a mule? That one wearing the blue coat of a peasant?"

He glanced at his own magnificence, feeling at the moment sadly overdressed. Simón, sure of his Republican beliefs, sure of his military reputation, and sure also of his aristocratic birth, had dared to dress with studied nonchalance. In this all-important encounter he had thus won the first round.

Great Colombia had been proclaimed, but much of both New Granada and Venezuela remained under

Spanish control. Bolívar respected the military talents of Morillo almost as much as Morillo respected his own. And yet in the conversation which followed he did not neglect the great opportunity this meeting presented. The two generals occupied the same little thatch roofed house. They swung side by side in their hammocks, they talked most of the night.

They met, Morillo said, as "brothers, friends, and fellow Spaniards." Afterwards the Field Marshal said that he had spent one of the happiest days of his life talking to Simón Bolívar. And it was Morillo who proposed that a monument be erected on the spot on which they had established their fervent friendship!

Bolívar also, writing to a friend describing the meeting said that the monument ought to be composed of rubies, emeralds, and jacinths. And, indeed, perhaps it should have been, for the astute Bolívar, following his advantage, was able to personally persuade Morillo that the cause of Spain was already lost in the New World! In the midst of all that good will he was able to get to the ear and to the heart of his enemy. Soon afterwards Morillo sailed for Spain, leaving in his place La Torre—who was "less active, less capable, less a soldier." These are Bolívar's words regarding La Torre.

A great victory had been won for the cause of South American Independence, not on a bloody battlefield but in a thatched hut, while two men talked together, while two hammocks swung in unison.

The armistice, the foundations of which had been

laid at this meeting, was altogether favourable to Bolívar. He was able to place his troops in just those places where they would do the most good. He was able to recruit a new and fresher army. He was able to win the military support of his generals. All this while La Torre, the Spanish general who replaced Morillo, sat still and did nothing. And then, as with many an armistice before and since, it ended—in renewed war.

On a morning which was particularly sparkling and clear, for it had rained the night before, Simón Bolívar stood on the thatched roof of a little white-washed mud house and saw the Spanish army in the plain below wheeling into battle formation. He saw the brilliant yellow, green, and scarlet of the uniforms; he saw the cavalry with its proud banners, and from afar he could just hear the faint but clear notes of the bugles. For a moment he thought of the toy soldiers, also imported from Spain, with which he had played in the patio of the house in Caracas. He had stoned those soldiers because they would not march. These, he saw, were marching!

At the battle of Carabobo, which was one of the greatest, if not the greatest, turning points of Bolívar's career, he was surrounded by most of those patriot generals who had survived the long years of war. He had won a battle on this same field in 1814, but now as he watched the early-morning preparations for battle he knew he must win a decisive victory. Neither Simón Bolívar nor Great Colombia could survive defeat. He felt confident. But before long he saw that he had been over-confident.

La Torre commanded those crack Spanish regiments which Morillo had trained and which were now veterans of colonial war. Among the elements in the patriot army Páez and his llaneros formed the strongest contingent. There was also an infantry regiment composed entirely of English and Irish, that regiment called the "British Huntsmen." The llaneros were spoiling for a fight. They had been idle for a year while Bolívar had been away in New Granada. There was a sort of tense gaiety in the patriot lines, born of high excitement and clear weather.

Bolívar jumped down from his roof, he hastened to the back of the lines to take command. He heard the sound of olés and saw El Negro Primero, Páez' slave who followed him like a dog, mounted on a gun case haranguing the men. He recognized an imitation of his own style of oratory.

"Nothing," shouted the big black man, "shall be in front of me to-day but the neck of my little horse!" and then, seeing the Commander in Chief looking at him and smiling, he stopped in confusion.

The army marched into battle, the llaneros of Páez in the van, the "British Huntsmen" following. But this was no charge with lances set and banners waving. To take the enemy on the far end of the plain, where they least expected to be attacked, the patriots had to advance through tangled underbrush. But La Torre saw the intention and Páez found himself at the base of a narrow ravine, the enemy above him opening terrible fire.

The llaneros charged—up the hill, into point blank

fire. They broke before it. Three times they charged and three times they broke, the third time they fled in disorder. But behind them the infantry, the "British Huntsmen," held firm. They advanced in perfect formation to the bottom of the hill, colours flying, drums beating "God save the King."

Retreating, almost riding over them in their precipitate flight, the llaneros scattered to the winds, while down the hill in hot pursuit came the Spaniards. Colonel Farrier of the "Huntsmen" formed his line. The orders rang out, in clear English.

"Load! Aim! Fire!"

The ranks knelt, aimed, and fired. Every man at the same instant, but every man at a different target. Colonel Farrier fell dying.

As he died he cried a last command, "Stand firm!"

Major Davy took command.

"Load! Aim! Fire!"

Now there were gaps in the ranks everywhere, but the men were as rigid as the lambricks with which they loaded their pieces. Waves of Spaniards broke before them. But other waves came on. Still the British, kneeling on one knee, fired—and fired again. Major Davy fell dead. Two more commanders moved up from the ranks. . . . fell. Soon there were powder and ball for only one more shot.

Bolívar was commanding the manoeuvres of the battle from a high knoll, he was guarded by two battalions of infantry. These he now ordered to advance at the double to support the "British Huntsmen." It was barely in time.

Meanwhile Páez had rallied his cavalry. He charged the Spaniards from the rear. And now a new man was in command of the British. It was Lieutenant Brant, who ordered the "Huntsmen" to charge up that hill with fixed bayonets! Rising from their kneeling position, they closed their ranks. They charged with spirit, in perfect formation. And the Spaniards fell away before them!

Not an hour before, that English regiment had opened fire. They had in that short time lost seven teen officers and one-half of their force. But they had at the end of this ordeal risen and charged the hill—and they had won their action.

Now the llaneros were fighting like demons, those centaurs of the plains were warmed up to the fight. Páez, now a general with a spyglass, saw a big horseman break from the ranks and flee. This would not do, he galloped forward. He would himself kill the deserting man, no matter now about being a general.

But it was El Negro Primero who came charging towards him. He reined up his rearing horse and saluted.

"My General, I come to say good bye. I am dead."

He showed the terrible chest wound as he fell off his horse to the ground.

In the end Carabobo turned out to be the greatest patriot victory of the war which was fought in Venezuela. Forty per cent of the Spanish army were killed or taken prisoner. La Torre shut himself up in the old fortress at Puerto Cabello on the coast.

Once again Bolívar entered his native city of Caracas in triumph. All Venezuela had been liberated from the Spaniards.

In the midst of victory, one of the greatest and most complete which he had known, Bolívar was deeply troubled. He wrote to a friend at this time:

"You can have no idea of the spirit which animates our military officers. They are no longer the men whom you knew . . . Even I, who have commanded them for years, cannot say of what they may not be capable. We are over a volcano which is about to erupt. I fear peace more than war."

He had always feared it more.

A great press of business overwhelmed him. There were innumerable letters to write, endless appeals. His salary was at this time thirty thousand pesos; out of this he sent ten thousand to the widow of Camilo Torres. A characteristic gesture; in his moments of triumph he was always generous with his money—just as in moments of trial he gave the last ounce of his strength, favouring himself no more than the most humble private in the ranks.

"We shall soon be far away from here, O'Leary," he said to his secretary, who was also a general. "Get me faster penmen. These fellows are much too slow. I dictate to three of them at once and still they cannot keep up."

"No man can write as fast as you can think, sire," replied the harassed Irishman.

"Nevertheless, get me some more penmen. I have only a little time left in which to plague them with my dictation."

O'Leary knew what he meant. He knew that Bolívar was impatient under the mountain of official business which all but overwhelmed him. He knew that he was looking southward—southward beyond Quito, southward even to Peru

There was no visible reason for the Liberator's heavy mood. Things of which he had long dreamed had actually come to pass. The old walled city of Cartagena, once more besieged—this time by the patriot General Montilla—had fallen. La Torre, dislodged from Puerto Cabello, had fled to Cuba. True, Morales with the remnant of Boves' old llanero army had moved into this fortress of evil omen, but his operations were confined to its immediate vicinity. The way to the south was clear.

But from the south another man was advancing into Peru. Another patriot general, another Liberator was approaching Peru and the apex of his career.

There are two shining names in South American history. One is the name of Simón Bolívar. But there is another name—a name almost as great. It is that of José de San Martín.

José de San Martín, also an aristocrat, was the son of a captain in the Spanish army, he had been born in a small town on the banks of the Uruguay River in 1778. He had, like Simón Bolívar, been sent to Spain to finish his education, but he had stayed longer in the mother country, serving in the war against Napoleon. He had been twenty years in the Spanish army when, at the age of thirty four, he

took up arms against Spain in the New World—in his native Buenos Aires, which was the name at that time of the whole country now called Argentina. He rose to be Commander in Chief of the patriot army and, like Bolívar, he had carefully planned and executed several marches over the Andes, leading forces from Argentina to aid Chile and leading Chilean forces back again to aid the sister republic. There are strange parallels in the careers of the two great men of arms. For example, four weeks after San Martín had left his base at Buenos Aires and having within that time crossed the Andes, he fought the battle of Chacabuco in which he defeated the flower of the Spanish army. Perhaps it only sheds more glory on him that the passes of the Andes on his route were not so high as those traversed by Bolívar, and that his army was much better rationed and equipped.

In one year from the date of this victory San Martín fought, at Maipo, the glorious action which liberated Chile for all time. Bernardo O'Higgins was at that time the great man in Chile, and in spite of the fact that his Irish father had served the cause of Spain as Viceroy of the province, the son devoted his life to the cause of Chilean liberty.

Now San Martín wished, just as Bolívar was wishing, to liberate Peru. He had bought warships from the United States. Also the Englishman Lord Alexander Cochrane commanded a very formidable navy which was under San Martín's command. Cochrane stormed Callao, the port of Lima, while San Martín laid siege to the city itself. After seven

months Lima fell and San Martin marched in. He received a stupendous ovation and the independence of Peru was declared on July 28, 1821, just a month and two days after Bolívar's victory at Carabobo.

When Bolívar was talking to O'Leary he had, of course, not received this news. It would not perhaps have mattered if he had. San Martin's tenure in Lima was most uneasy.

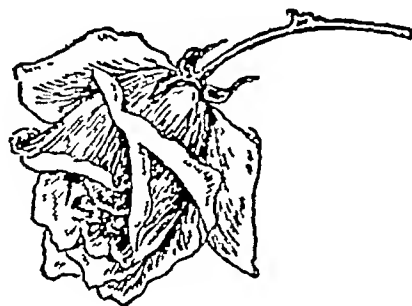
San Martin's career paralleled that of Bolívar in general pattern. But at no time did San Martin suffer such crashing defeats as those from which the Venezuelan had rallied so often and so magnificently. His was Bolívar's career with much of the agony removed. San Martin's way had been straighter, around him had been men, like Bernardo O'Higgins, upon whom he could implicitly rely. San Martin was a big man with clear blue eyes, he looked rather like Washington. But his character was sterner, he was an excellent soldier, but an austere and lonely man. Personally, temperamentally, no two men picked at random from the pages of history could be more different than the two men who share the honours of liberating South America.

San Martin hated fiestas and public acclaim. Presented with a golden victor's wreath in Guayaquil, he rudely tore it from his head. He made no social concessions of any kind. In the over-refined pleasure-loving society of Lima he was a bull in a china shop. He quarrelled with Lord Cochrane, and that Englishman, always something of a free lance as an admiral, sailed away and left San Martin alone amid the Peruvians who didn't like him, alone also.

to fight a very strong Spanish army which San Martín had refused to subdue. This, in fact, was the cause of his quarrel with his admiral.

When Bolívar heard the news of the liberation of Peru, he heard this news also. Already he knew enough of San Martín's character and of the land of the Incas to know that his rival's—unfortunately it seems clear that it was as a rival that Bolívar regarded San Martín—victory could not be permanent.

Yet when this news came to him he was not even thinking of Peru. He was entirely engaged with the liberation of Quito. And each night he was dancing with the lady of the red rose.





XXI

THE LIBERATOR OF THE SOUTH

IN 1823 PERU was still the land of gold and gems—that El Dorado which the Conquistadores had sought. It was still haunted by the ghosts of Inca caciques, or kings, whom they had murdered. One of the last of these had been that Tupac Amaru whose cruel fate had been told to Bolívar when he was a baby on Hipólita's knee. For this descendant of the Inca kings had dared to revolt against the Spanish Viceroyalty. His unspeakable agony lingers forever in the perfumed air of Lima, the capital city of Peru.

Nor had the cruelties of Pizarro been forgotten during three hundred years. At Cusco, whose name signifies that it is the centre of the world, an underground lake lies beneath the Cathedral. Each year

this lake was said to boil on the anniversary of Pizarro's arrival. Nor could the priests prevent the Incas from making an obeisance as they passed the spot.

In Peru, in Bolívar's day, the rich were very, very rich and poverty was abysmal. Every luxury which Europe could import was enjoyed by an aristocracy eternally wealthy with that root of all evil, gold. The descendants of the Conquistadores still wore the actual jewels which their ancestors had wrested from the Incas. And all day silent Indians worked on the hills behind the city, digging gold and yet more gold.

Nor had Peru, which was now nominally independent, felt the brunt of war as had the countries to the north. Aristocrats—ranking officers in the army among them—still were able to lounge all day on the silken divans drawling about this and that, sometimes even about politics, in their soft and lazy Castilian. Their eyes were dilated from chewing the leaves of the coca plant.

Pizarro had called the capital city of the Incas "the City of Kings." Bolívar's Lima was a city of gardens and of flowers. Clouds of swallows arose before the pedestrian; and gayer, more exotic birds, lighting upon the giant tropical lilies, looked unreal, like a mosaic made of gems. The air was heavy and moist and perfumed. It was as if the blue sky were covered with glass. As if the city itself were a fantastic hot-house.

From a man who was a stranger in this brilliant and decadent land a message came to Bolívar. It was from San Martín, who had endured too much.

"Protect this unhappy nation! You alone, Bolívar, are capable of delivering it from its madness. God Himself would be powerless, but I know you and have confidence in you!"

So wrote San Martín and in the same letter he suggested that he meet Bolívar at Guayaquil.

When he laid down his pen he said to an officer who was near, "We shall meet, and I predict that America will never forget the day on which we embrace."

The invitation did not come as a surprise to Bolívar. Just after his latest victory at Carabobo he had sent a trusted officer, Colonel Ibarra, to Lima. He had heard that San Martín favoured a monarchy. Bolívar was as bitterly opposed to monarchy as to a loose federal democracy, his political ideal was always consistently between the two. For the nations of South America, Bolívar always advocated that constitution which he had first conceived so long ago in Cartagena, that modified application of the English form of government. The idea of monarchy was horrifying him. He felt much the same way about San Martín's ideas as did Jefferson about Hamilton's alleged monarchical tendencies.

But to go to Peru "and learn the truth of these notices, with all details, antecedents, present status, and probable results, so that we can form a just opinion" and to "endeavour to penetrate and sound out the spirit of General San Martín and try even to persuade him to relinquish the project of erecting a throne in Peru, which would be scandalous," as Colonel Ibarra's instructions read, was a matter of

time. It was a matter of time even to go and to return from Lima to Bogotá. And much stirring history was meanwhile enacted

For on the way to Peru lay Quito. To subdue this province Bolívar employed a pincer movement, he entered from the south, while Sucre fought great battles in the north

Between those glistening glacial ranges of the Andes, Bolívar marched down the valley of the Cauca. He came to Popayán. He was about to lay siege to the place when the officer in charge of the garrison came out under a flag of truce and requested an interview. The end of their talk was the bloodless surrender of Popayán; Bolívar had won the Spaniard by the power of his personality. It is strange to see so great a soldier turn suddenly into a great diplomat. It is perhaps in Bolívar's unique versatility that his genius lay, certainly in this quality lay much of his fascination.

And then the man who did not fear mountains was again face to face with the Andes, high, white and terrible. He ascended with his army into the mighty heights of the scrambled glacial peaks. Up beyond the clouds into blue, cold space. Once more they crossed raging cataracts and black gorges. In the very centre of this terrain lay the town of Pasto—unshakable in loyalty to Spain. When Bolívar arrived at the gorge below this town, he had already lost one-third of his troops in the mountains!

He had hoped to avoid Pasto by that art of his which he had learned in the Venezuelan Andes, that art of taking such wild passes through the mountains

that none might follow and none might find him out. But he had not been successful this time. He must, with his exhausted and diminished army, accept the battle which now offered. Even to Bolívar the odds seemed too great. He, the ever-confident, was almost ready to concede defeat.

In Pasto all the men were not only fanatically devoted to Spain, they were a race of sharpshooters. As an old leader of guerrillas, Bolívar knew how to evaluate this. He rode out alone to scout the precipitous battleground near Bomboná. The enemy was securely entrenched directly above the patriot army. No strategy was possible but a straight, undisguised frontal attack up the face of the volcano, into the fire of the sharpshooting men of Pasto.

"The task seems impossible," said Bolívar, addressing his troops, "but we must conquer, and we will!"

It tore his heart to see his men charge up again and again into the devastating fire which broke their ranks. The wounded did not fall so much as crumple and drop backwards into the abyss below them. It looked as if his whole army was about to be destroyed, the sun had dropped behind the highest peak. And then he saw something. Simón trained his glass intently upon a certain spot. General Valdéz was leading his men in a thin file straight up the face of the cliff. A cliff so steep that he was protected from the enemy fire by its sheer declivity.

He saw the thin line rise higher and higher on the scaly side of the volcano. And then with the ap-

proaching darkness a must arose Bolívar wiped his spyglass. It was no use Valdéz was hidden Everything was hidden

Then as if by a heavenly miracle there was a sudden beam of light It showed Valdéz at the top, and it showed the men of Pasto fleeing before his victorious charge! At that moment, in full force, Bolívar ordered a last charge up the mountain It was dark now He could see the flash of muskets, like fireflies here and there in the darkness And then the moon arose In the shimmering blue light falling on the glacial snows he saw the end of the battle, he saw the Spaniards in flight!

In Pasto, Bolívar fell ill with one of those racking fevers which had so many times before threatened his life Meanwhile Sucre had won the great battle of Pichincha, and the last of the Spanish forces around Pasto, hearing of it, surrendered to a general who could not leave his bed of fever.

Bolívar had lived with religious fervour for an ideal. His whole adult life day and night had been given to the country he had created. An aristocrat reared in luxury, he had suffered all privations, fought with no more protection than the roughest llanero in the ranks he commanded Most of the time he had not had so much as a roof over his head When a roof was provided, by a strange paradox it was apt to be lined with a gilded ceiling. But he had slept only a few nights in palaces. Mostly he slept on the ground on a square of rawhide, in a hammock swung under some leaky thatch or in the open

between poles, and only at rare intervals in some sumptuous Spanish palace

Now he was thirty nine. He was recovering from a nearly fatal fever. To his astonishment he was tired, even as other men are tired, by a day in the saddle. Perhaps his triumph in Quito was more needed than the past triumphs had been.

He had other things to think of. The United States had officially recognised his Colombia, and he had received a famous letter from General San Martín. The letter in which San Martín said that he would like to meet Bolívar at Guayaquil and that he had more faith in the Liberator than he had in God Himself.

But Bolívar knew that one of the chief objects of San Martín's visit to Guayaquil was to annex it to his own precarious government in Lima. It may not, therefore, have been only an accident which led Simón Bolívar to arrive at Guayaquil fourteen days before the Liberator of the South arrived. Great festivities were planned in San Martín's honour. Festivities planned by Bolívar, who was by that time in undisputed control of the place—which had long been wavering between the government of Colombia and that of Peru. The British ship *Macedonia* was sighted—on board was General José de San Martín, Liberator of the South.

The first wreath which was sent on board San Martín's vessel bore this greeting: "Welcome to Colombian soil!"

San Martín had hoped to annex Quito for Peru! He was so taken aback that he refused to land at all.

He stayed on his vessel throughout the night Simón, not wishing to notice his apparent slight, went on board to greet him. And there began the contact—no more than a series of three conferences—which was indeed historic. It was also tragic.

Mitre, who is the best-known biographer of San Martín, says of Bolívar on this occasion, "The Liberator of the North had on his side the sun and the wind "

Bolívar, as we have seen, had studied his man. He had sent other emissaries than Colonel Ibarra to observe San Martín. He knew, as San Martín himself did not, the full extent to which his position in Peru was undermined. He had made sure of Guayaquil for Colombia.

It was in the clear sunlight of the morning of July 26, 1822, that Bolívar went on board the *Macedonia* to welcome San Martín. The big blue-eyed man looked solemn to the point of gloom, but the small agile dark man was all smiles, all graciousness. He did not need to eye San Martín carefully, he already knew all about him.

Awkwardly, without grace, San Martín consented to accompany Bolívar ashore. The city was adorned with flowers. There were endless speeches of the flowery kind especially detested by San Martín.

He became more and more silent. He now made no effort to force a smile. A group of girls approached, and before he sensed their intention they placed a gilded wreath on his head. San Martín snatched it off in fury.

Then, seeing the offence, he stumbled, "Thank you

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very much I shall keep this wreath as a souvenir!"

At the sumptuous house which had been prepared for him there were more endless speeches.

"Don't you find this sort of thing nauseating?" he loudly whispered to Bolívar

Even when they were at last alone, these two greatest figures in South American history were not free to talk, for the first conference was merely a ritual of presenting various staff officers. There were still more ceremonies before their serious talks—there were only two of them—began

"I will not disguise from you," began San Martín, "that I had hoped from the first that we might agree to cede Guayaquil to the government of Peru."

"I see all the reasons for this," agreed Bolívar quickly "but it has been my lifelong conviction—it has indeed been a tenet for which I have dedicated my life—that in matters of national allegiance the people themselves ought to be given free choice. I suggest on this point, a free popular election."

San Martín had seen only too clearly how such a vote would go. He was silent, he had lost Guayaquil and he knew it.

"Military affairs in Peru are at present very complicated," and he went on to tell Bolívar at length how complicated they were.

"Perhaps," he suggested with childlike trust, "you would lend me your army. General Bolívar?"

The two men were talking in a setting which became then both. Bolívar had caused a fine old Spanish house to be refurbished and hung with those deep-rose Venetian brocades which he loved.

The furniture was black; it had been brought from Spain no later than 1550. They sat at one end of a mediæval carved table, darkly shining with age. San Martín sat at the head of this table and Bolívar lounged in a chair at his right hand. On the corner between them was a gold-chased decanter of Amontillado.

Neither man smoked, and wine meant little to each. From time to time, however, San Martín tossed down a goblet of the clear amber wine at a gulp. It was as if he sought his lost happiness in it, as if he wished to wash away his disappointment at this interview from which he had hoped so much. He had, he thought bitterly, expected to resurrect his life with the aid of Bolívar. How different was the reality, sitting so close to him, from the man he had imagined!

San Martín went on to say that with Bolívar's army, with his personal prestige, all could be regained in Peru.

"General," said Bolívar, "I cannot at this precarious moment part with my army. To do so would be, as you yourself well know, to lose all I have gained. However, I quite see your own need for help. Would three of my best battalions help you?"

San Martín gulped another goblet of the old wine. He cast down his sad blue eyes. "This man wishes to command, whereas I would be glad to lay down my authority if only it meant the freedom of this whole continent," he thought.

"Let us, General Bolívar, skip diplomacy. Our

time is short and the issues are very great. I see plainly, or think I see, that you do not wish to submit your army to my command. I understand that I also am a soldier. Very well. I myself will cut the Gordian knot. I will submit my own army to your command!"

Before this most generous offer Bolívar was completely surprised—at last. He had never met a man so generous. Perhaps it was the beginning of his personal tragedy that he did not clasp the hand of the first really generous rival he had ever met. But Simón Bolívar, at this moment of destiny, prevaricated.

"It would be necessary for me to get the sanction of the supreme Congress of Colombia before I could accept your most generous offer, General," he said, not speaking very distinctly, rather mumbling his words.

And then San Martín let a silence fall. Neither could for the moment break it. They both saw their future ways. It was no surprise to Bolívar that these appeared, in this vista of the future, to diverge. To San Martín this was the culminating disappointment of his tragic life.

But he tried once more. He had heard that the Liberator of the North was bitterly opposed to his own ideas of monarchy. An idealist himself, he could well understand this. Perhaps, after all, that was the only thing which divided them? Finding his voice, he spoke with passionate conviction.

"Consider all those numerous disintegrating factors which we who would bring ruin out of the

chaos into which our country has fallen, face! There are the heterogeneous races. There are privilege and abject poverty. There is the dangerous martial spirit, so useful in revolution, so dangerous in peace. This is why I favour the stability of monarchy.

"When I left Spain for my homeland I expected to find everywhere a vast and unanimous thirst for liberty. But how that dream has been shattered not once, but over and over again! No matter what military success I have achieved I have always seen it turn to wormwood in my hands. There is no political faith in our people. You and I are head and shoulders above them. We must think for them."

Now it was Simón's turn to find his tongue. Democracy was his topic and the words rushed forth as a cataract shot downwards between Andean crags.

"Democracy, which has thrived even in the polluted soil of Europe, should most certainly be established and grow strong in the virgin soil of America! Monarchy could be no more than a silly caricature of the vicious systems of Europe. But let a republic, a strong republic, once be established and you will see political virtues grow in our people. A monarchy could not last, for the love of freedom is now too deep in our people. It is for freedom that they have fought and for freedom that they have died!"

He said much more to the same effect. It left San Martín sad and speechless. And then, perhaps to convince San Martín that what he said was true, that the people of South America would not follow if led to monarchy, Bolívar took out a letter from his

pocket San Martin looked at it, sensing evil. He gulped one last goblet of Amontillado

The letter, Bolívar explained, was from Colonel Gómez, his personal agent in Peru. He handed it to San Martin but he could not bear to watch his face. Instead, he himself poured wine into his own goblet after he had politely filled San Martin's.

The letter told of a revolution which was about to break out in Lima, a revolution against General San Martin!

The wounded lion did not roar with pain. Instead, San Martin paced the floor. He had forgotten his surroundings. He could not lift his head. He walked back and forth, with the mechanical motions of a long-caged wild animal.

As Simón watched him he was full of sorrow for this man. And yet he did not see in him his own approaching fate. It seemed to him that San Martin suffered because he had been unable to understand human nature as he, Simón Bolívar, understood it. But his heart was torn as he watched a brave and gallant soldier whose heart was breaking. And then at last, after he had opened his mouth silently several times San Martin spoke.

"If the advice of this colonel of yours proves correct my public life is finished. My mind is made up. I shall return to Europe. I shall live unknown and alone, I shall live in poverty, for the service to my country has brought me nothing, but before I close these eyes in death I hope to see the republican principles which you so nobly defend an established reality, here in my native land." And then he added,

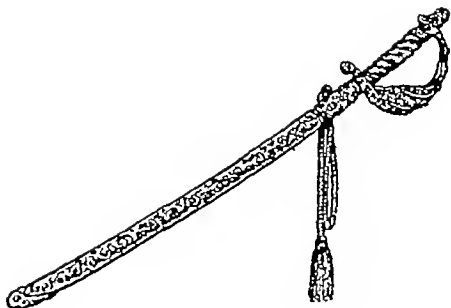
"History will record which of us has forecast the future most truly." The strong man turned away. Simón knew that he was weeping

That night there was one of those great balls which Simón loved, this one was to honour San Martín, the Liberator of Chile, the Protector of Peru. But San Martín, although he had dressed himself in his full military regalia and although he cut so fine a figure, could stand no more. His bitterness welled up in his throat, and he stole away while the orchestra swelled in the rhythm of the dance

He sent gifts to Simón Bolívar: his own beautiful war horse, a fowling piece, and a pair of fine pistols. With the gifts there was a little note not without the bitterness which overwhelmed him, but it ended.

"... accept these poor gifts from the first of your many admirers!"





XXII

THE CITY OF KINGS

CALLAO, the port of Lima, was gay as it had never been gay before. All the way to the capital there were arches of flowers. Generals in splendid uniforms performed police service in keeping the crowding populace from under the feet of the triumphal procession before whose progress those dark eyed, silken slippers Peruvian Amazons strewed roses. In the centre of all this a thin man sat very straight on a beautiful horse. Simón Bolívar was entering Lima, Pizarro's "City of Kings."

Surrounded by flowering trees, and fragrant from the exotic blossoms which grew in its formal gardens the Villa Magdalena overlooked the Pacific. In each

window were birds of gorgeous plumage, they swung in elaborately designed cages made of pure silver. And in the Villa Magdalena the dinner service was of gold. This was the villa which the Peruvians gave to Bolívar, the hero of their hearts.

To Simón, the man who had dared as greatly as he had dreamed, the man who had endured every hardship, the city of Lima was paradise. For a little while it seemed that all he had striven to accomplish was here realised. Perhaps, too, the colours were more brilliant, the scene more enchanting, because he was in love. For the lady who had thrown him those roses which he had caught between his teeth, the lady who had crowned him with a victor's wreath and with whom he had danced all night at Bogotá and Quito, was now almost always by his side.

Not long after they had danced all night she mounted a white stallion, and rode into battle beside Simón Bolívar. She was clad for the fray in well-cut white trousers and in a scarlet hussar's coat heavily laced with gold. She handled her lance like one of Páez' llaneros. No wonder the troops called her "La Libertadora."

She was slender and as beautiful as she was brave. Returned from battle, she would change for the evening and emerge clad in a Paris creation, her shining hair most carefully coiffed in the latest mode. It was the period of the first Empire when the filmy diesses, which were inspired by the Grecian mode, to be smart must be sheer enough to be pulled through a lady's wedding ring! She was witty and gay in conversation and dancing was not the least

of her accomplishments, since it was as a partner of one of the best dancers in the world that she had won a soldier's heart.

Dr Thorne, a staid Englishman, looked on with out dismay. He was used to Manuela. It was Simón who was afraid of her. Since his gentle and adored little wife had died, no woman had dominated him. He had spent his life in winning victories. He did not now propose to be defeated. And yet he knew the danger he faced when he looked into the flashing eyes of this lady of Peru.

Mrs Thorne, the lady of the roses and the wreaths, appeared as the incarnation of all those things which in his incredibly active life he had had to do without.

"Mrs Thorne" so little describes Manuela Sáenz! Manuela had spent her girlhood in Lima, in Peru, that land of which Bolívar was now always thinking. In Lima highborn ladies enjoyed a freedom in sharp contrast to the secluded existence which was supposed to be led by ladies of Spain. They did as they pleased, in Lima. They smoked, gambled, drank, and chewed the leaves of the coca plant, which made their mischievous eyes even blacker and more seductive.

They walked alone on the streets, a thing unheard of even in Madrid. They wore elaborate dresses of the Empire period which were suited to the hot and languid climate—and to the display of charms. In that fashionable afternoon parade in the bosky shades of the park which is so fixed a custom in all Spanish cities the ladies of Peru, instead of coquetting with fans in their carriages, rode astride spirited horses,

wearing filmy pantalets trimmed with lace. Their satin slippers were thrust into silver stirrups and, as they rode, ornaments of gold and silver made a musical clinking. The only masculine part of their attire was a stiff hat, set at a rakish angle.

Manuela Sáenz was a lady of Peru. When Simón met her she was just twenty-two. But no other lady in the "City of Kings" could rival her in horsemanship or in fencing, for she could defeat the Liberator's most experienced officers with the sword. Or at shooting; Manuela was a dead shot.

At the Villa Magdalena the Marquis of Torre Tagle was one of Bolívar's first dinner guests. He was a reformed loyalist, the present President of the new Republic of Peru. All the gold service had been removed except for two giant golden vessels, half decanter and half pitcher. From time to time wine was poured from them into the glasses of the two men, who were alone in the great dining-room. The servants poured the wine and then disappeared.

"Your reception of a plain soldier has touched my heart, Excellency," said Bolívar to Torre Tagle.

"You, sir," replied the Marquis, "unite in your person all those qualities which the people of Lima most adore. You are an aristocrat, and you are a man of the people at the same time. But, more than this, you know how to take applause."

Bolívar knew that he was indirectly referring to San Martín. He felt a sudden sadness. Also, the magnificence of his reception had not blinded him to the great weaknesses of the new and unstable Peruvian Republic. He did not have to inquire of

Torre Tagle to know that there was no money in the treasury of Lima, in spite of the gold and jewels everywhere so lavishly displayed. He knew that he would have to send to Santander in Bogotá for money with which to pay his troops. He knew that a well-equipped force of eighteen hundred Spaniards watched the city from the hills and that Torre Tagle himself was but half a Republican. He was a Spanish aristocrat and these were hard to convert to democracy—permanently.

It was not without a reason that Bolívar, however, had kept his distinguished guest.

"Some dispatches have come for me, Excellency," he said to Torre Tagle, "which will, I think, be of interest to you. This first one I shall not read, though to me it is of great importance. For from it I learned that the last remnant of Spain in Venezuela had surrendered at Puerto Cabello. When I was a youth this old fort was the scene of a most bitter defeat, and there is to me something of poetic justice in the fact that it was the last place to surrender to the cause of freedom. It was the first defeat, now it is the last victory!"

"But what are those other documents which I see in your hand?" asked the Marquis after he had made fitting and flowery compliments to the Liberator on the final surrender of Spain in Venezuela.

"It was excerpts from these which I had proposed to read to you," said Bolívar. "They come from the city of Washington. President Monroe, alarmed by that dangerous coalition in Europe called the Holy Alliance, has announced to the American Congress

a doctrine under which the democracies of the New World shall in future be more closely united Listen.

“It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced that we resent injuries or make preparations for our defence With the movements in this hemisphere we are of necessity more immediately connected, and by causes which must be obvious to all enlightened and impartial observers. The political system of the allied powers——”

Here Bolívar interrupted himself to explain to the Marquis that by this expression, “allied powers,” the American President referred to that dangerous combination of monarchies, called so misleadingly the Holy Alliance, which threatened in effect to make one great totalitarian state of Europe, with England standing almost alone opposing it

“The political system of the allied powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America . . . We owe it, therefore, to candour, and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers, to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere But with governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have on great consideration and on just principles acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any

other manner their destiny by any European power, in any other light than as a manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States."

"That is very interesting indeed," said the Marquis. "But what does Great Britain say of it?"

"I have another letter here in which I am informed that the news has already reached the United Kingdom and that one and all are heartily in favour of the new doctrine announced by the United States. I myself could not have achieved such military success as has fallen to my lot had it not been for the unparalleled bravery of the British troops who have crossed so many miles of ocean to serve the cause of liberty."

"Is that the end of that very interesting paper?" asked the Marquis.

"There is just one more paragraph, which I should like to read. It is gratifying to me personally, as it shows that the cause for which I have seen so many brave men die is identified in the United States with their own successful struggle for liberty."

"It is impossible that the allied powers (the Holy Alliance) should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness, nor can any one believe that our Southern brethren, if left to themselves, would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible, therefore that we should behold such interposition in any form with indifference."

The Marquis remained silent, in thought.

"This is especially of concern for us," said Bolívar, "since it was the threat of Spain as head of the Holy

Alliance to reinvade South America which brought the declaration of this doctrine about "

"I envy your ways of being informed about world events," said the Marquis, "and I am indeed glad to have heard the contents of so important a paper I feel that this paper will be of great historic significance Who knows? Perhaps it will form the basis of an alliance of the Americas?"

"Who knows?" repeated Simón as he bowed the Marquis to the door

"I will see General Sucre on my balcony," said Bolívar to a servant who announced the arrival of Sucre at one o'clock that night.

He had indeed passed the Marquis on his way in The balcony was bright with blue moonlight It was overhung with the lacework of flowering vines, and between the intricate pattern which they made the glistening silver Pacific could be seen Sucre stood stiff, his sword by his side He looked like a statue of a noble knight For a minute Simón, coming through his unlighted bedroom, which opened on this balcony, stood and watched him, this young man whom he loved more than any other in the world It seemed to him that Sucre looked like the figure of a knight which he had seen on a mediæval tomb in Spain Though the figure had risen upright, it had lost none of its marble rigidity.

But at the same moment he was embracing the youngest of his generals

"José, my son and my comrade-in-arms!"

"My General!"

But their mutual joy was momentary. Sucre had bad news.

"In spite of all I could do, that fool of a Peruvian general, Santa Cruz, set off with five thousand troops to confront the whole Spanish force. I tried all the ways I knew to prevent him going. Now news comes that without even fighting a single battle he got himself into such impassable mountain territory that, out of his whole force, not six hundred men remain alive!"

"That is bad," said Bolívar.

"It is indeed bad. I am greatly afraid that here among these lazy good-for nothing, luxury loving Peruvians we shall not be able to do the feats which we accomplished in our own countries."

"That is no way for a general to talk, Sucre." The intimate tone was gone from Bolívar's voice. "Always a general fights more than a battle, he fights men—with men. And in this strategy despair has no place. As for me, I am resolved to spare no pains whatever, and will compromise my soul to save this land!"

At once he commenced upon the greatest task of all, the preparations for the battle of Juanin.

"The difficulties are vast," he wrote to Santander, who was now in command at Bogotá. "There reigns a disorder that appalls the most determined. The theatre of war is equatorial America, our enemies are everywhere, our soldiers are men of all parties, countries, dialects, laws, and interests. Only Providence can bring order out of this chaos."

But order was at last achieved, an army was raised,

and in this task Providence was at least assisted by Simón Bolívar. He realised that he must outnumber, outequip, and outgeneral the forces which opposed him in this strange land. And then in the midst of everything he caught a frightful fever. He crept away to be alone. He went to a place on the Pacific ninety miles from Lima.

There his envoy to Buenos Aires found him, a small bundle of brown bones. This skeleton was lying in the gentle sun, a wet cloth over his head to cool the fever.

"What will you do now, my General?" gasped the envoy.

"What will I do?" replied the sick man coolly. "What I have done always. I shall conquer!"

And he rose from bed in giddy weakness and went on with his preparations. After five months an army of nine thousand well-trained and well-equipped troops faced the Spanish at Juanín. To join in the battle all the other patriot armies had made epic marches—marches like those which Bolívar had himself accomplished when he crossed and recrossed the Andes. General Miller, the Englishman who commanded one of the armies, led his troops over six hundred miles on top of glittering glaciers where the temperature never fell below zero. Many of his men died of heart attacks induced by the altitude. The whole army marched on foot—to save the horses.

The battle of Juanín was a tournament. Fought near Pasto, high, high in the air beside the Lake of Kings, the cavalry of both armies rushed together

as in a joust, lance to lance. And then, the lances red now the cavalry galloped back to charge again. Slowly the Spanish gave way. Yet their numbers were superior. Bolívar had won another great victory.

But Juanín was little more than a prelude to Ayacucho. Yet before this battle there was a change of command.

Bolívar, back in Lima reorganising his army, called Sucre to him.

"You have been made Commander in Chief," he said. "Henceforth it is for me to obey your commands."

"But, sire, this cannot be! Even if it were true, neither I nor my officers would submit to such a thing."

"It is quite true."

And he showed Sucre the dispatches from Bogotá in which was stated that he Simón Bolívar, having accepted the supreme command in Peru, was no longer to be considered as the supreme commander of Colombia. Sucre was appointed to fill his place.

Sucre frowned deeply as he read.

Then he said, "Sire, you have an enemy, a mortal enemy!"

"This is no time to bother about my personal enemies. I am only glad that you and not another have been chosen as my successor. Perhaps," he smiled, "we can work together?"

But Sucre did not smile.

"My General," he said, "listen! Santander will destroy you. He hates you with an undying fury.

He conceals it well, I know. But he, and only he, has done this thing ”

“Nevertheless, a command is a command to a soldier. I obey the dictates of the Congress—and so will you!” And then he smiled again. “Perhaps as yet I have not quite got the subordinate tone!”

When the thrilling bugles sounded which announced the commencement of the long-prepared-for battle of Ayacucho, all who heard them knew that the fate of South America hung on the issue of this single battle. General Sucre was heavily outnumbered. He had but one cannon, while the enemy had eleven, he had some five thousand five hundred men to the enemy’s approximately nine thousand five hundred

“Upon your efforts to-day depends the fate of South America!” cried Sucre, addressing his troops; and then, waving his sword, he shouted, “Soldiers! Three cheers for the Liberator! Long live Simón Bolívar, the Saviour of Peru!”

The battle of Ayacucho was one of the decisive battles of history. Before the spirit of the patriots, before the spirit of Bolívar, the Spanish for the last time gave way.

Sucre, writing of it to Bolívar, said.

“The campaign of Peru is ended. Its independence and the peace of America have been signed upon this battlefield. The United Army hopes that its victory of Ayacucho is a worthy offering to the Liberator of Colombia.” And then, having cited several of his generals for bravery, Sucre ended:

"The only reward I ask for myself is that you continue to be my friend."

Reading the letter, Bolívar's hand shook and he turned away to hide quick tears. Then, while all about looked on in uneasy wonder, he danced about the room waving the letter over his head.

Certainly this victory seemed a miracle, for it was not yet a year since Bolívar had landed in Peru. At that time the patriots held securely hardly more than one or two towns on the Pacific, for even in Lima there was royalist sedition. In this short space an army of more than nine thousand men had been trained and equipped and twice that number of the enemy had been killed, wounded, or captured. With this battle the liberation of Peru was completed, a vast and rich land, twice as large as France, Germany, and the British Isles put together, had been given its independence.

And yet there was one place still in Spanish hands, one fort still stubbornly holding out. It was the walled city of Callao and the garrison there was commanded by the young Spaniard Rodil. It was the siege of Cartagena all over again. Once more the very creeping things were eaten. But on January 23, 1826, Rodil at last surrendered and the flag of Spain flew no more over South American territory.

"What punishment shall we mete out to our prisoner, Rodil?" the patriot general who had forced the Spaniard's surrender asked Bolívar.

And Bolívar replied, "I know that you have a thousand causes for just fury against Rodil. But

heroism never calls for punishment Think how proud we should be of him if he were a patriot!"

Rodil received his sword and a passport for Spain. He had held the fort at Callao for two long years after the battle of Ayacucho.

On the first anniversary of this battle Bolívar and Sucre found themselves in Alto Peru, this is the great country which we now know as Bolivia There were many ceremonies And then, as a crown to everything, Simón and Sucre were presented with two heavy silver caskets. Inside were the sort of uniforms of which one reads in fairy tales The buttons were of pure gold, beautifully chased with a design representing laurel leaves, the coats were heavily embroidered in the finest gold thread and heavily encrusted with jewels Bolívar's initials were embroidered in diamonds and emeralds The bicorne hats had pure white plumes and were also draped with gold lace But it was in the swords and their scabbards that the most elaborate goldwork of the Incas was displayed Each sword and scabbard was set with one thousand four hundred and thirty-three diamonds! It was estimated that these diamonds weighed seventy-three carats.

But as if to point the travesty of these regal presents, Bolívar the very next day received a letter from Páez from Venezuela Everything there was going to rack and ruin Páez ended his letter by the suggestion that Bolívar crown himself King!

Páez was not alone in making this suggestion A party had arisen who thought that Bolívar in the interest of the future stability of the country ought

to assume royal state. They advocated the title "Emperor of the Andes."

To them Bolívar replied firmly, "If I can never equal Cæsar or Napoleon in exploits, I shall at least surpass them in disinterestedness, posterity shall never say of me that I preferred myself before my country."

To Páez he replied, "The title of Liberator is superior to every other that human pride has conceived, it is unthinkable that I should degrade it!"

And yet he knew that he must hurry north or all that had been accomplished with so much blood and sweat would be in vain.

Before leaving Alto Peru, he and Sucre wore those uniforms and appeared in all their sparkling splendour.

"What medal is that, sire," asked a general, "that you wear on your breast?"

"That," said Bolívar with pride, "I wear always. It is a likeness of President George Washington, one of the greatest generals who ever unsheathed a sword. It was presented to me, through the kindness of the Marquis of Lafayette, by George Washington Parke Custis, Mrs. Washington's son. It contains a lock of Washington's hair."

Turning over the medal, the general read these words: "This portrait of the author of liberty in North America was donated by his adopted son to him who achieved equal glory in South America."



XXIII

PINNACLE OF GLORY

FOR A BRIEF space the light of supreme glory shone upon Simón Bolívar. Here in Peru dreams were reality. Great Colombia had come to life and Bolívar was everywhere honoured as the author of South American liberty and the father of his country. For a little while at least even the jealousies and plots and factions were subdued or undiscovered or at peace.

As if to witness a dream come true, one of the most magnificent dreams in the world, Simón's old tutor Rodríguez once more turned up in South America. He was in Bogotá. At once the Liberator wrote him the most affectionate letter, begging him to come to him at once. He reminded Rodríguez that he had

implanted in his mind the seeds of those ideas which had borne such magnificent fruit

The old man came as hidden and was received by Bolívar with extravagant honour, but the years had dealt unkindly with the old savant. He was now an eccentric old man, querulous and difficult. Bolívar arranged with President Sucre to put him in charge of the school system in the new Bolivia, but there Rodriguez caused endless trouble and at last long suffering Sucre had to remove him from office. Yet Bolívar loved and revered him as before, and at this supreme moment of his career gave much thought to the old man's happiness and welfare.

Other heroes might have rested their oars, might have been content to further consolidate victory, but Simón was at once too much a man and too much a creative genius for that. He was already busy with the greatest scheme of all, the most magnificent conception of his mind—the Pan American Congress.

Bolívar envisioned a flexible union of all the republics in the Americas.

"We ought," he said, "to conclude an American pact which, uniting all our republics in one common council, shall place America before the world in an aspect of majesty and grandeur unparalleled in the history of the nations of antiquity. United America—should heaven grant our desire to see it—will be worthy of being called the Queen of Nations the Mother of Republics."

But the Congress which was called by Bolívar as a first step towards this union—or "Court of Arbitra

tion" as Bolívar called it—and which met at Panama was a sad fiasco. Many South American nations failed at the last moment to send delegates and the two North Americans who were to have attended never arrived. Mr Anderson, who was the American minister at Bogotá, died on his way to Panama, struck down by a fever in Cartagena, and Mr. Sargent, his friend and colleague, arrived at Panama when the Congress had adjourned!

For once Bolívar accepted defeat.

He said, "I am like the crazy Greek who stood upon a hill and watched the ships passing below him in the bay, imagining that he directed their course by the waving of his arms!"

There were other disappointments even more bitter and nearer home. On all sides he saw clearly the fatal beginning of anarchy, the disease which was to destroy his Great Colombia. In the midst of the pleasures and the fêtes of Peru he was constantly haunted by bad news—bad news from Bogotá, where Santander was undermining his prestige and working against the constitution which Bolívar felt was the only safeguard against anarchy, bad news from Venezuela, where Páez was openly rebellious.

"Colombia calls me, I must go."

So he answered to impassioned pleas of the Peruvians, who were heartbroken at the thought that their liberator could ever leave them. When Manuela saw that he was adamant about going away, she wanted to go with Simón, but this he refused. He was a little afraid of this strange and spirited woman who was in such sharp contrast to the gentle María

Teresa or even to Señorita Pépa. He did not propose to fall dangerously in love. Manuela had too many dangerous fascinations, she might end by enslaving him. The conqueror did not propose to be led a captive.

He sailed away from Callao, bidding eternal farewell to the land of the Incas.

It was almost night and the city of Bogotá was stung by a slanting downpour. The rain fell with such force that it made miserable little fountains which sprang from between the cobblestones of narrow and ancient streets. Here and there were banners. There were only a few of them and they were half obliterated by the gloomy rain. By the light of a torch Simón read one of them, it said not "Long live the Liberator" as he had half expected, but "Long live the Constitution." And this was not his constitution. He hardly recognised Bogotá, a city he had not seen in five years. In that time he had achieved perhaps the greatest victories of his career and he had finished the work of liberating South America, but this was hardly a triumphal reception to the capital city of Colombia.

Santander rode beside him, with a few officers who had accompanied him to meet the returning Bolívar.

"It is too bad about this frightful rain," said Santander, "we had many magnificent plans for your reception, Excellency."

"It does not matter, receptions mean very little to me," said Bolívar.

"Then, too," Santander went on, "we were not sure that you would come. I wrote you——"

"You wrote me not to come. That is one reason why I am here " Bolívar's tone was even.

"It is true perhaps that things in Venezuela do need your own personal attention." Santander thus chose to ignore the sarcasm.

"Yes, there they have been further removed from the effects of your excellent government, Santander "

Simón, who was sensitive to every shade of political feeling in his countrymen, already knew to what extent Santander had succeeded in undermining his prestige. Had not this been the pattern of his life? Great victories, achieved against superhuman odds, and then—treachery robbing those victories of their reason for being. He rode silently amidst these officers who had come to meet him.

In his ears still rang the passionate entreaties of the Peruvians that he stay with them forever. He would have been glad to do so. It was stern duty which had called him north once more. A lesser man, secure in the leadership of a great and rich nation, might have left those other countries which he had freed to their fate, but Simón Bolívar had lived for the glory of his country, he was prepared to die for it.

And then he knew that he must go to Venezuela and real trouble; Mariño, the ever-treacherous, again. This time it was upon Páez that he had worked his wiles. Páez, like Santander, had never liked the union of New Granada and Venezuela. But similarity of views did not unite these old

comrades-in arms. Instead, Santander had had Páez denounced before the Congress of Colombia. Now, enraged, Páez had made himself with the aid of Mariño the Commander in Chief of a Venezuela insurrection.

Once more more Bolívar crossed the Andes.

He wrote to Páez: "I clearly see our work destroyed and the maledictions of the centuries falling on our heads as perverse authors of such disastrous mutations. It is not possible, General, that you wish to see me humiliated for the sake of a handful of deserters whom you have never seen in battle? I will yield everything for glory but I will also combat everything for glory. Be assured of the affection which I bear to you."

Páez had tried to persuade Bolívar from afar to enter Venezuela without an army! But Bolívar knew his country too well for this. And Páez found himself powerless before the love which the people of Venezuela felt for the Liberator. His own llaneros began to yearn for "Old Iron Seat," the greatest soldier in the world.

Bolívar had already become a figure of legend. Ballads were sung from one end of Venezuela to the other and the hero of these ballads was not the Cid but Simón Bolívar. As he advanced, the vast power of his name increased. It was from Puerto Cabello that Bolívar once more addressed his former comrades-in arms. He promised that no punitive action would be taken against Páez by the Government of Colombia. (But the Government of Colombia didn't know about this.)

Páez, painfully relieved, at once recognised Bolívar as President of Venezuela and ordered a triumphal entry into Caracas

Páez rode out on the highway to Valencia to meet the first man of Venezuela. Gaily Bolívar embraced him and the hilts of their swords became entangled

"A happy omen for the future," said Bolívar

But Páez was awkward, he was, in spite of his uniform and his medals, only a schoolboy ashamed to have betrayed a friend. At a banquet Bolívar made one of his spontaneous gestures of generosity. He presented Páez with the magnificent jewelled sword which had been presented to him in Bolivia! The llanero's eyes shone with childish pleasure. He was no longer the great man, only a simple plainsman. A fine sword to an llanero is the sum of all good

A messenger arrived from Lima. It was Colonel Gómez, who was well acquainted with all the figures of importance in both Lima and Bogotá

"You will not believe the tale I have to tell, Excellency. I will be brief and you, afterwards, will ask me how and why."

"Go on, Gómez. I am listening."

"It is Santander. That man wishes you dead!" broke out Gómez

"But what has he to do with Peru? Is not the control of Colombia enough for him?"

"I have no certain evidence, but it is said in Lima that his agents stirred up the trouble there. It is hard to believe that not six months after you left with

the whole country weeping when so a short time ago you were the most adored figure—that now they accuse you of ‘atrocious conduct.’ There was an uprising and against it Manuela Sáenz actually raised a little army. But she was caught and imprisoned and now she has been sent to Guayaquil.”

“Is she safe?” asked Bolívar

“Oh yes, as far as I know. More serious things are yet to be told. Santander has stirred all the people of Bogotá against you, saying that your reunion with Páez whom he detests, was done without the authority of the government. He seizes all pretexts, however slight, to overthrow you and all the constitutional reforms which you have spent your life trying to achieve. Excellency listen to me! I am your friend and I tell you that if you do not speedily return to Bogotá all the work of your life will be undone!”

Bolívar got up. He was straight still, but very thin. His carefully arranged hair was greying and his eyes were infinitely tired.

“Oh Gomez what do you ask? I cross and recross the Andes, I go to Peru, I even consider going to Panama. And what does it all achieve? Before my presence, by a sort of magic I do not myself understand, the crooked is made straight. Men work together for a brief time for the common good and then called somewhere else I leave and all is lost. Worse than lost. One man cannot control a continent. It shall never be said of me that I have been a dictator. Supreme power I have been given not once but many times, by the free will of the people. But

I have, and you know that I have, always sought to give freedom to the countries which we have liberated with sweat, blood, and tears Not complete freedom I know too well that in this country that may never be, but I have spent my life in trying to get constitutions accepted under which all might live secure in justice and secure in liberty ”

He stopped and choked a little He dropped his head in those beautifully fine hands of his

And then, with his voice unsteady, he said, “But what have we done? For what have my dear comrades died? We have achieved independence, but I fear we have achieved nothing else whatever ”

That night on the British ship *Druid*, Sir Alexander Cockburn commanding, Simón Bolívar sailed away from Venezuela. He was never to see the land of his birth again

After the battle of Boyacá the new united government of Colombia had presented its creator with a fine jewel This was a country estate, a quinta, in the emerald mountains at the back of Bogotá The earth never comes nearer to paradise than in the ornamental mountains which surround the Quinta de Portocarrera Long rows of cypresses led to the old buildings themselves, which were ornate with the heraldic carvings dear to noble Spaniards In the crystalline sun of the tropical highlands the flowering vines which clung to the ancient walls glowed with unnatural brightness Greenhouses provided strawberries and other luxuries of more northern climates Green velvet lawns swept to the river which curled

around the quinta. And from a mountain cataract, divided and divided again, little rivulets watered the grounds in the Moorish manner of the Conquistadores who had settled this country three hundred years before. In the patios were fountains ornamented with tiles from Seville in Spain, the water which glistened in the sun was made of the Andean snows.

It was to the Quinta of Portocarrera that Simón Bolívar returned from Venezuela. Someone else returned to Bogotá at about the same time. Manuela Sáenz, with her great laughing Negro maidservant, who went with her like a shadow, and with a small guard of soldiers, was making her way through the mountains. She was dressed as a man and as a soldier.

She was a frequent visitor at the quinta and she tried to make the card games which went on there a little more pleasant. Bolívar, as we have seen in Jamaica and Puerto Rico—when the brief spaces of his heroically busy life had permitted—had excelled at games. He could beat most people he met at chess, also at billiards, but cards—there luck played a part! He could not always win. And he could not teach himself to be a good loser.

Towards the end of a losing game he would watch every play with rapt attention and then, beaten in the end, he would throw the cards down in black rage and rush from the room. It was Manuela who would bring him back to apologise.

"Gentlemen, forgive me. I have lost many battles you know. You know, too that in those times I

used to be patient Why is it that I cannot play a silly game of cards?"

It was the strain on those iron nerves. The nerves of a highly sensitive organism; the nervousness of a mettlesome Arabian stallion who had seen too many battles. For the world beyond the quinta was full of disillusion and bitterness

There were the unending wiles of Santander, the unending ways in which—always from new and unexpected directions—he struck at all the principles which Simón held dear. Bolívar saw the edifice which he had built in tears and blood chipped and chiselled away before his eyes.

And there was the press of Bogotá, controlled by Santander, always full of calumnies. It was hard for Bolívar to read them Often he felt that blinding rage which he had felt at the card game.

"Excellency, get rid of that man," counselled O'Leary boldly. "Not for yourself In order to preserve what you have built He will destroy this country "

But Simón Bolívar said, "No The people of Colombia have put Santander in his position It is not for me to put him out of it "

But Bolívar made efforts still to defeat those measures directed against the form of government in which he so devoutly believed and those men who wished openly to separate New Granada and Colombia, whose union had fulfilled his life's ambition—yet it was heart-breaking work.

One day, returning from Bogotá, he fainted. For days afterwards he felt strangely tired

To Manuela he confided, "Nothing seems to matter to me, as it once did."

And yet he arose to fight once more. Once more he took supreme command of the Colombian Republic. It meant leaving the quinta and living in the palace of the city of Bogotá.





XXIV

THE LAST BATTLE

THE OLD PALACE which had belonged to the Viceroyal Spaniards was built, as most South American mansions were, directly on the street. But, once more in the saddle, once more leading armies, Bolívar spent little time within it. There was trouble in Venezuela, but this time it was Páez who put it down; and in Peru, whither Bolívar rode, but Sucre was able to deal there. And now in Bogotá he found that Santander, who had been encouraged out of measure by his own leniency, was again busy—in getting the Bolívarian constitution repealed, in separating the states. Yet when the great Constitutional Convention met at Ocaña in 1828 Bolívar would not attend, though he knew it was packed against him.

"The people and not I must rule," he said to Manuela.

But at night he could not sleep

One night Manuela came into his room to read to him, the single lamp burned low, it was late. In a low voice she read on. Suddenly the clash of arms rang out, shots and the shouts of battle!

She heard Colonel Ferguson demand, "Who goes there?"

Bolívar jumped from bed, reached for his sword.

"They have come to murder you!" she cried. "More than a hundred men have attacked the Palace. They are assassins!"

"What does it matter? I have faced death too often. What does it matter?"

"*No, no, no!*" Manuela's voice was between a luss and a scream. "Look, the window! *Look, the window! Jump!*"

"No."

"I say *yes! Jump!* What will this country do with out you? *Jump* while yet there is time. No general must be taken alive. *Jump!* For the sake of your country. *Jump!*"

And by the strange, quick magnetism which flared within her she dominated Bolívar, who loved her. Something within him gave way, and he allowed her to push him through the low window.

The door was bulging with the blows upon it. Manuela seized a rapier. When the great door broke, the soldiers saw a woman straight and fierce. They saw a swordsman ready to fight.

"Where is Bolívar?"

"How should I know? He is not in the city "

"You lie, woman. Where is he? Speak or I strike "

"Strike, beast, strike if you dare! This rapier is my own, and you will pay with your life!"

Again there was that in her eyes which dominated. Swords dropped from suddenly slackened arms. The men swore as they saw the open window. There was no need to ask further questions.

When Bolívar dropped to the ground from the window he felt himself caught in strong arms

"Thank God, Excellency, that you are safe!"

It was José Palacio, the steward of the household, an old soldier, ever faithful. Together they crept under the ancient stone bridge in the centre of the city. About them were the cries and shouts of civil war. Everything was confusion.

"José," said Bolívar, "I wish something very strongly."

"What is that, Excellency?"

"I wish that I had been killed. My heart is dead, and my glory has left me."

The insurrection, which had begun with the intended assassination of the Liberator, was quelled by his loyal followers in Bogotá, and the would-be assassins were brought to trial. It was an open secret that if Santander did not have an active part in the infamous plot he had at the very least been an instigator of it. He was among the first to be arrested. The men who had taken weapons intending to murder Simón in his bed were Santander's closest friends.

Before a tribunal where feeling ran high, for Bolívar's ardent partisans were still shaking with rage at the murderous attempt upon his life, Santander was sentenced to death. He sat in his narrow cell in unbroken and stubborn silence. Even the rattling of the key in the lock of his cell did not cause him to change his pose as he sat with his shoulders hunched over his hatchet face, like a condor on a crag.

But he started when the rusty latch was at last turned, for Simón Bolívar stood before him in the cell.

"I have come, Santander. I have come to tell you that your sentence has been commuted. I have decided to give you your life. You are to go into exile. No one knows that I am here."

Santander's self-control, maintained so long, broke suddenly. He sobbed and knelt at Simón's feet, kissing his hands. "I am innocent. Por Dios, I am innocent."

"No, Santander, you are not innocent, nor am I so much a fool as you seem to think, no one in the city of Bogotá believes you innocent. And how should I believe it when in a thousand ways, ever since the first day we met, you have sought to defeat my plans and to bring me to personal disgrace? Now you have plotted my murder."

Simón pushed Santander, who was still clasping his feet, away from him.

He stood by the door of the cell and said, "I do not save you, Santander, because you are innocent! I pardon you for three reasons. First, you are a brave

soldier and have been my comrade-in-arms in many battles. Second, according to your lights, you have used your great talents in the service of Colombia. Third, if I stood by and saw you shot according to the just sentence which has been meted out to you, there might be those who would say that Simón Bolívar was afraid of a deadly enemy! I am not afraid of you, Santander, or of any man on earth I go. We shall not meet again in life."

Once more a slight figure sat in a great carved chair, filling not one-third of the seat. Bolívar's eyes were now dulled by suffering, those eyes which it had seemed that time itself could not dim. Nor was it time, the man who sat in the great chair in back of the old Spanish table was reading. In the dispatches which lay on the table he read news too bitter to be borne. Here in this room he had sat almost impotent while the country he had created fell to pieces. And now civil war. He must climb once more into the saddle and lead an army to battle. But not now against the soldiers of Spain. It was against his own patriots that he must now fight! For faction had risen against faction, and he must fight once more or the country he had created would be destroyed by anarchy.

Aided by Sucre, he once more brought peace to the giant territory which he had freed, but, returning to Bogotá, he only faced more evidence of its coming disruption. Even young Córdoba, the gallant young general who had led a brilliant charge at the battle of Ayacucho—he with the step of con-

querors—rose in revolt. His insurrection was quelled by O Leary Bolívar's secretary and general and one of his most devoted friends. In Venezuela, Páez again rebelled. Quito was about to secede from the Republic of Colombia, to become Ecuador—the scene of successive revolutions for a century to come.

"I am dying," Simón muttered to himself "I am dying and my lifework is dying. It would have been easier if I could have died believing in my dreams!"

And then for the last time he went before the Congress at Bogotá. He pressed them for the acceptance of his resignation. Reluctantly, with tears in many eyes, they gave him what they saw that he must have—peace. Simón Bolívar was now no longer President of Colombia, he had no title whatever, he was merely a human being, a soldier, honourably discharged.

Down the Magdalena. Down to the town of Mompox the city of gold where the periwinkles grew in the streets. The man who travelled coughed incessantly, and he was almost penniless. Yet only recently Bolívar had refused a pension of thirty thousand pesos a year voted to him by the Congress of Colombia. He was leaving life behind. He was gone, he himself knew not where. He had left without saying good bye to his dearest friend. He had not been able to summon courage to say good bye to Sucre. Beyond the city of Mompox in the hut of some poor Indians who lived in the mountain wilderness, Bolívar was sipping a cup of chocolate which the Indian woman had made for him.

"The sick officer reminds me of pictures of the Liberator," she said to her husband as, with unconscious blasphemy, she crossed herself

This sick man took a letter from his pocket and read The grave-eyed Indians watched These mighty men of earth, these officers in the army—they were capable of miracles like reading meaning from a piece of paper, but it was plain that they had heavy trouble too

My General.

When I went to your house to go with you I found you gone Perhaps it is well, for it has spared me the sorrow of a last farewell My heart is empty I cannot find words

I have no words to tell you the sentiments of my soul concerning you You know them well, for you have known me long, and you know that it was not your exalted position but deep friendship which has inspired in me the deepest affection for your person I shall preserve it no matter what fate befalls

Good-bye, my General! Receive as a token of my friendship the tears which I am shedding at this moment Be happy wherever you are going, and be sure always of the devotion and gratitude of your most loyal and passionate friend,

ANTONIO JOSE DE SUCRÉ.

"Have you no stories of the wars to tell us, Captain?" asked the woman "For we are far from the frequented trails and we hear little of the great world which we cannot see "

"Be still, woman," said the Indian "Can you not

see that if this poor officer talks it will make him cough?"

"Yes but I can see, too, that he is a man with a broken heart. It may hurt his chest but it will ease his soul."

And Simón replied to them

"Yes, I will tell you the story in a few words of the perfect knight, the flower of Colombian chivalry. Around his neck hang the names of great battles, his victories. He was the hero of Ayacucho and of Juanin and many other battles, before and since. This young man never betrayed his friends and he never betrayed his country. Though he has in his glory ruled as a king, he has shown mercy, past understanding. I myself have been present when he received in a silver casket a uniform and a sword, inlaid with gold, diamonds, and precious rubies. Once when he was President of a great country an assassin entered his chamber and attacked him with a knife. But the young General is strong and lithe. He conquered his assailant. And he pardoned him. Not only would he allow no sentence to be meted out to the man but he from his own pocket gave him money for a journey away from the place of his crime. And now all good things have come to this noble warrior. He has married the beautiful lady of his dreams, María Carcelán y Larca, Marquesa de Solanda, and she has but just presented him with a little son. The name of the knight is Antonio José de Sucre."

At the head of the Magdalena lies the walled city

of Cartagena, crowned by the greatest fortress in the New World. Simón had come to this city, now steaming with tropical rain. In the terrible heat the poor sick man could not breathe. With the last of his money he travelled to a little seaport town, Santa Marta. He wanted to be near the sea, to get a breath of air, also he still hoped to sail away on it, away from the land for which he had given his life.

A letter reached him. Bolívar seemed to turn into a statue of yellow marble as he read. Sucre had been murdered! Riding on his way to his wife and month-old son, he had been set upon and assassinated in a lonely forest.

"They have killed Abel," murmured Bolívar.

He called for pen and paper and wrote a last letter.

"If there were a single sacrifice I could make—my life, my honour, my happiness—I would not hesitate, but I am convinced that sacrifice would be useless. Since I am unable to secure the happiness of my country, I refuse to rule it. In truth, the tyrants have taken my country from me and therefore I have no longer any country for which to make a sacrifice."

And then a little later he wrote those saddest words: "*All who have served the Revolution have ploughed the sea*."

Some friends now had come to the little villa above the sea, where a small bundle of bones, with eyes that burned bright with fever, lay coughing painfully.

"I do not suffer!" said the General, who had seen many brave men die.

He had reverently taken the last sacrament and a priest was among those few friends who surrounded his bed. There were Mariano Montilla, his nephew Fernando Bolívar, José Palacio, and Andrés Ybarra, who had shared with him the fatal night in Bogotá. There were also two doctors, perhaps the best which the times afforded—a Frenchman, Dr Réverend, and an American doctor from a ship in the harbour.

"With what disease does His Excellency suffer?" asked General Montilla, taking Dr Reverend aside.

"It is tuberculosis," whispered the doctor.

Montilla suddenly wept aloud.

The sick man had been unconscious, but suddenly he sat up in bed. The clear tones of command rang out.

"Jose, the luggage! Let us go! The ship awaits us. They have no further use for us here!"

Tenderly they laid him, unconscious again, back in the rumpled bed. The candles burned unnoticed in the afternoon light. There was the soft cadence of prayer. Dr Reverend dropped the transparent hand which he had been holding.

There was a moment of utter stillness. And then again the cadence of prayer, which was almost drowned by the broken sobbing of the comrades-in-arms who knelt about the poor bed of the man they had loved.

It was one o'clock in the afternoon of December 17, 1830, the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Republic of Colombia. Simon Bolívar lay dead.

Yet the spirit of Simón Bolívar will never die. It is the great star of the south which guides a con-

continent Millions upon millions reverence his name, and his likeness is stamped not only upon the coins of many realms but upon the hearts of all the people in them The soldier who dared all marches on, for the flame of courage never burned with a clearer light

Twelve years after the poor soldier died, the solemn funeral of the Liberator took place The harbour of Santa Marta was crowded with men-of-war and the flags of the great nations of the earth were flown at half-mast Cannon boomed in salute as the body of Simón Bolívar was placed upon a warship to be taken home to its final resting place in the Pantheon at Caracas Solemn music and the roll of muffled drums accompanied Bolívar's last triumphal march through the streets of Caracas A whole city united in the deepest mourning At the tomb, openly weeping, his plumed hat held over his heart, stood Páez, the old llanero, the President of Venezuela It was he who had arranged these great honours for his Commander in Chief

Bolívar liberated four great countries, a territory of over one million five hundred thousand square miles He devised a system of government for this large part of the world and guided its political destinies as President almost until his death His great dream of South American freedom would never have become a reality if he had not created his country, 'Great Colombia, out of whole cloth on the very battlefields whereon he won his most astonishing victories He always said of himself, "I

am a soldier," but he was a soldier who created the destiny of a continent

It is true that his life was made of drama, for, having accomplished all this and though he died when he was still almost a young man, he lived to see nearly all of it fall in ruins, to see his most trusted friends turn traitors and plot his assassination

He lived to say with despair, "We who have served the Revolution have ploughed the sea!"

Yet we to-day know that Simón Bolívar did not plough the sea. The seed which he sowed may have taken more than a century to bear fruit, but it is eternal, for he planted the tree of human liberty

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